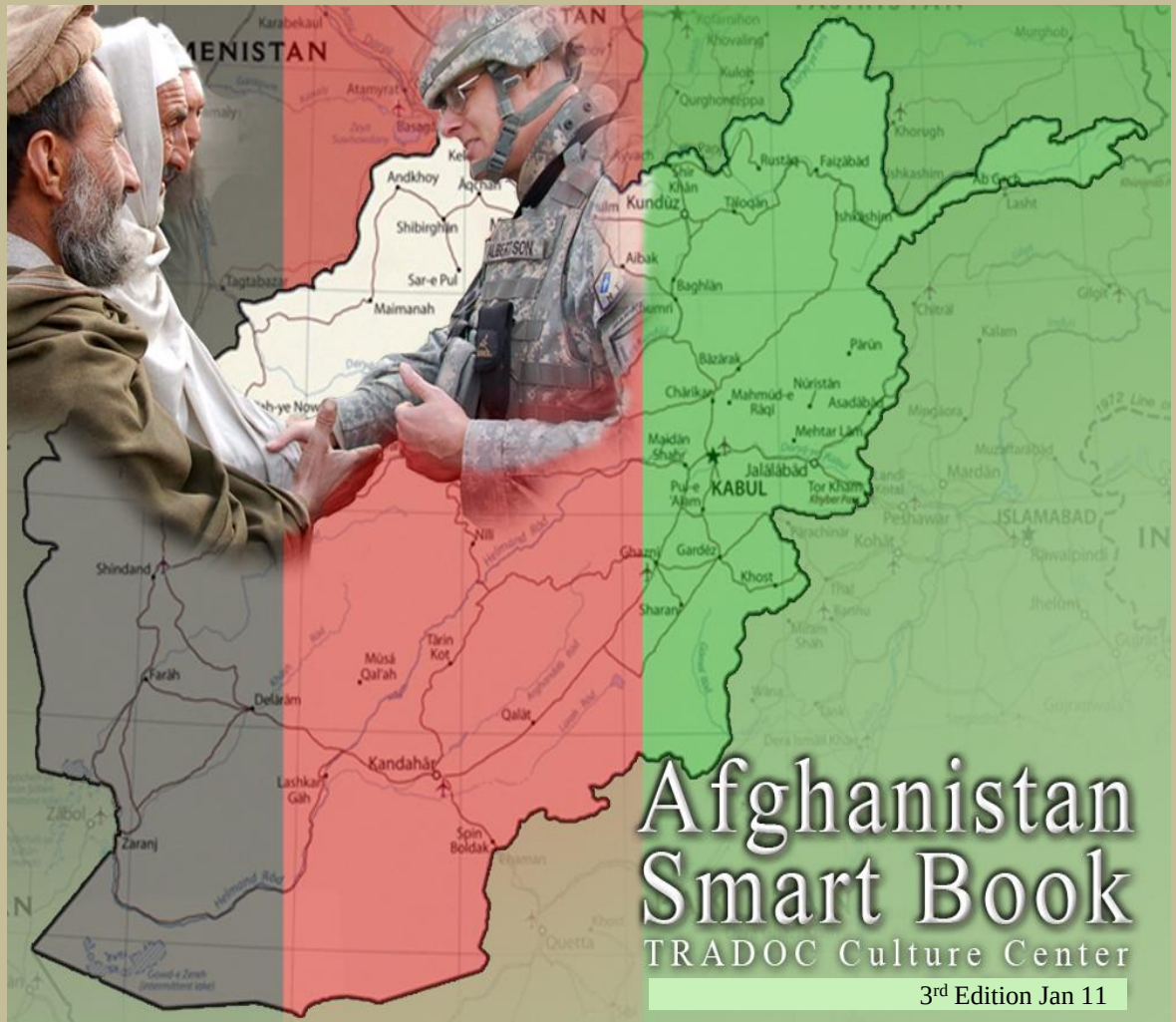

Afghanistan
Smart Book
TRADOC Culture Center
3rd Edition Jan 11

Purpose

To ensure that U.S. Army personnel have a relevant, comprehensive guide to help enhance cultural understanding; to use in capacity building and counterinsurgency operations while deployed in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

About This Book

The Smart Book contains information designed to enhance Soldier's knowledge of Afghanistan, including history, politics, country data and statistics, and the military operational environment. The Smart Book concludes with an overview of the culture of Afghanistan including religion, identity, behavior, communication and negotiation techniques, an overview of ethnic groups, a regional breakdown outlining each province, a language guide, and cultural proverbs, expressions and superstitions.

Focus

"We must demonstrate to the people and to the Taliban that Afghan, US and coalition forces are here to safeguard the Afghan people, and that we are in this to win."

- **General David H. Petraeus**
Commander, ISAF
"Change of Command"
5 July 2010
The Washington Post

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History

History Timeline

- **334-326 BCE:** Alexander the Great's conquests

 Establishes many trade centers in Afghanistan that include Kandahar and Herat

- **30-248 CE:** Kushan Empire

 The Kushans were great patrons of Buddhist art and culture; Bamiyan Buddha statues erected

- **642 – 1187 CE**: Islamic Conquest of Afghanistan

 Resulting in the conversion of Afghanistan to Islam from the pre-invasion practices of Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism and other belief systems

- **962 – 1186:** Ghaznavid Dynasty

 A Persian dynasty of Turkic origins centered in Ghazni, brought in language (Dari) and a rich Persian culture to Afghanistan

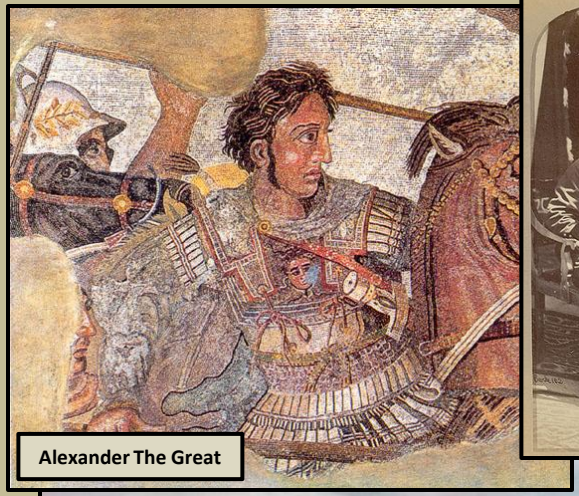
- **1219:** Mongol Invasion

 The Mongols devastated Afghanistan, killing the population of major city centers, causing the population to revert to an agrarian rural society

- **1747-1826:** Durrani Empire

 This was the beginning of the modern Afghan State and the Pashtun ruling class

Great Afghan Conquests



Alexander The Great



Anglo-Afghan Wars



The Mongol Invasions

History Timeline

- **1839-1842:** First Anglo-Afghan War

 The start of the "Great Game", which was a power struggle between Russia and Great Britain in an effort to win power and dominance in the region; Britain occupies Afghanistan and uses it as a buffer to protect British India from Russian territory

- **1878-1880:** Second Anglo-Afghan War

 Afghans attempt to end British control of the country

- **1893:** British establish the Durand Line

 This disputed border separating Afghanistan from British Indian territories would eventually lead to strained relationships between Afghanistan and the new state of Pakistan; Durand line designed with the defense of India in mind

- **1919:** Third Anglo-Afghan War

 After which Afghanistan gains full independence from Britain

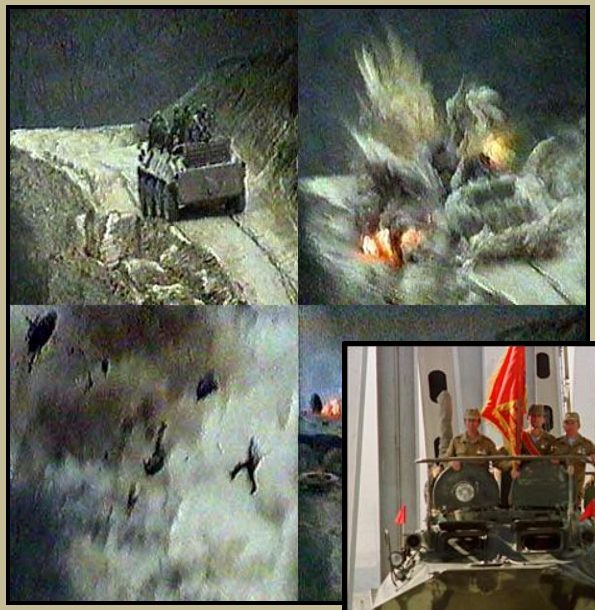
- **1919 – 1929:** The Kingdom of Afghanistan

 King Amanullah moved to end his country's long-standing isolation and develop diplomatic relationships with most major countries; slavery abolished in 1923

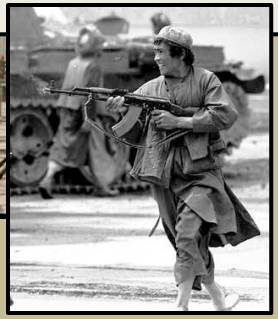
- **1973:** Republic of Afghanistan

 Monarchy abolished; establishment of a republic

Afghan-Soviet War







Soviet Losses:

14,553 Dead

53,753 Wounded

Afghan Losses:

1 Million Afghans killed

5 Million fled country

2 Million IDPs

(Internally Displaced Persons)

During the 1980s, one out of two refugees in the world was an Afghan

Soviet Occupation
Dec 1979 – Feb 1989

History Timeline

- **1978:** Coup by communists backed directly by Soviet Union
- **1979:** Soviets invade, install pro-Moscow government
- **1980s:** Anti-Soviet jihad fought by the Mujahedeen
- **1989:** Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan
- **1992:** Last Communist regime falls; Mujahideen forces vie for power and factional infighting begins
- **1994:** Civil war intensifies; 70% of country destroyed; Taliban rise to power
- **1996:** Taliban capture Kabul and declare Islamic Emirate; Osama bin Laden relocates to Afghanistan
- **1996 – 2001:** Era of Taliban government's "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan"; based on the Taliban's view of Shari'a Law
- **1998:** U.S. cruise missiles strike an Al Qaeda terrorist training complex in Afghanistan

History Timeline

- **Sep 2001:** Northern Alliance leader Ahmad Shah Masood killed by Al Qaeda; who made Afghanistan their base and subsequently attacks World Trade Center and Pentagon
- **Oct 2001:** Coalition forces begin air and ground operations in Afghanistan, support to Northern Alliance
- **Nov 2001:** Northern Alliance captures Kabul
- **Dec 2001:** Taliban fall from power; Bonn Agreement establishes Afghan Interim Administration with Hamid Karzai elected as chairman

History Timeline

- **Jun 2002:** Hamid Karzai becomes interim President
- **2002-2003:** International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) forces responsible for Kabul
- **Aug 2003**: NATO assumes command of ISAF
- **Jan 2004**: NATO/ISAF assumes responsibility for Northern Afghanistan and begins gradual transition of responsibility from the US led coalition

Banned by the Taliban

Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Suppression of Vice (PVSV)

- Firecrackers
- Nail Polish
- Christmas Cards
- Lobster
- Music
- Hanging pictures in Home
- Beard Trimming
- Statues
- Wine/Alcohol
- Kite Flying
- Stuffed Animals
- Computers
- Sewing Catalogs
- Clapping During Sporting Events

- Education for Women
- Satellite Dishes
- Movies
- Dancing
- Western Haircuts



"Innovative form of Shari'a combining Pashtun tribal codes"

United States in Afghanistan



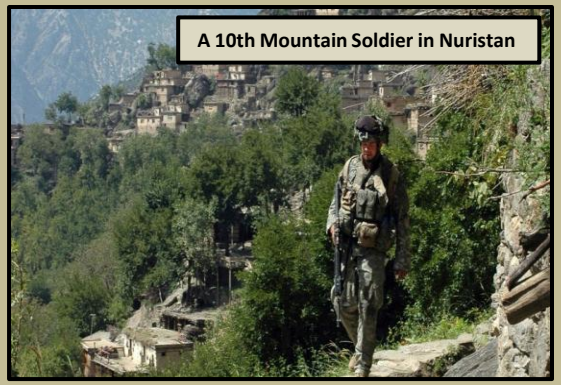
Operation Mountain Fire, 2009



ANA Soldiers in Khost, 2007



Delivering humanitarian aid in Paktia, 2009



A 10th Mountain Soldier in Nuristan

History Timeline

- **Jan 2004:** New constitution introduced
- **Oct 2004:** Presidential elections, Karzai elected
- **Oct 2006:** NATO assumes responsibility for security across Afghanistan
- **Jul 2007:** Former King Zahir Shah dies
- **Aug 2007:** Opium production soars to a record high, according to UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- **Nov 2009:** President Karzai sworn in for second term amid controversy and accusations of ballot stuffing
- **Dec 2009:** President Obama to increase troop strength in Afghanistan from 68,000 to 100,000
- **Jan 2010:** Taliban introduce a “Code of Conduct” in an effort to reduce civilian casualties, soften their image, and win allies

POLITICAL



Flag of Afghanistan

- **Black stands for the time period of 1839-1919 when the Afghans fought three wars of independence against the British Empire**
- **Red represents blood, sacrifice, and the continuous challenge of the people to overcome hardship**
- **Green is the color of Islam, symbolizes peace, and hope for the future.**

The writing on the flag emphasizes the importance of Islam by stating: "There is no God but God and Mohammad is his prophet"

The mosque with the mihrab is from seal of Abdur Rahman Khan, added by Habibullah Khan (who ruled 1901-1919).

POLITICAL MAP



Afghan Provinces and Districts

Afghanistan's 34 provinces are divided into 397 districts in 2004 compared to 325 districts that existed prior to 1979. Currently, the Afghan Ministry of Interior (MoI) recognizes 398 districts. As Afghanistan continues to organize itself, this number may change over time.

Political Structure

- **Executive** — President is head of both state and government
 - Provincial governors for each of Afghanistan's 34 provinces appointed by the president
- **Legislative** — National Assembly consists of two houses:
 - Lower- *Wolesi Jirga* (the House of the People)
 - Responsibility for making and ratifying laws and approving the actions of the president
 - Upper- *Meshrano Jirga* (the House of Elders)
 - Advisory role with veto power

- **Judicial** — Supreme Court
 - All justices (nine, including Chief Justice) appointed by the president and approved by the *Wolesi Jirga*
 - Subordinate by high courts and appeals courts

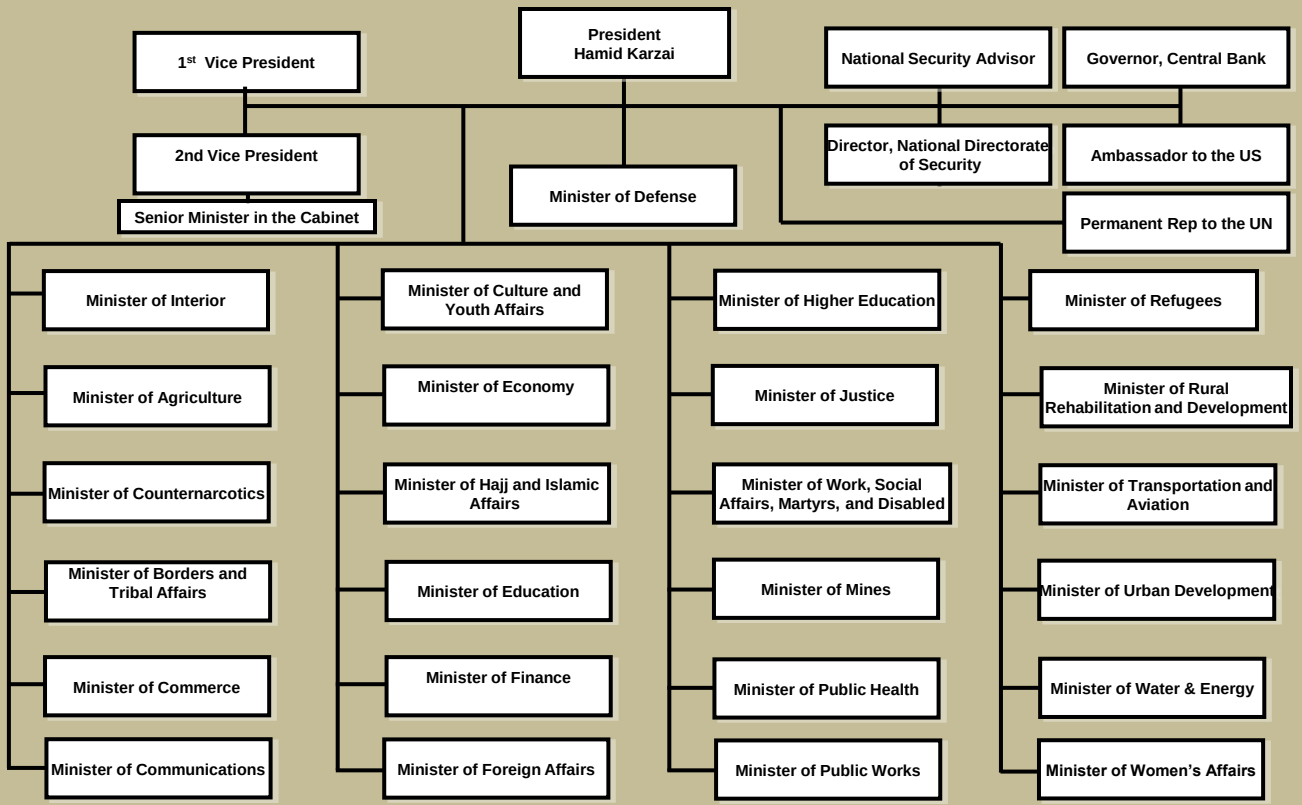


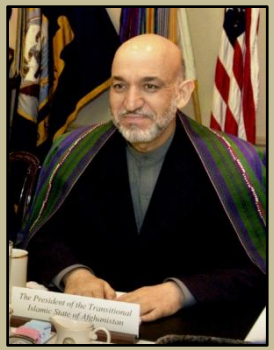
Election Billboard, Kandahar


Afghan Parliament Building


Inauguration, Hamid Karzai, 2004

President of Afghanistan and Cabinet





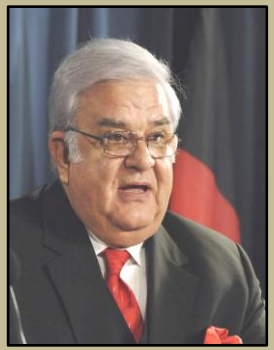
Hamid Karzai
President



Mohammad Fahim
1st Vice President



Karim Khalili
2nd Vice President



Abdul Raheem Wardak
Minister of Defense



Zarar Ahmad Moqbel
Counter Narcotics

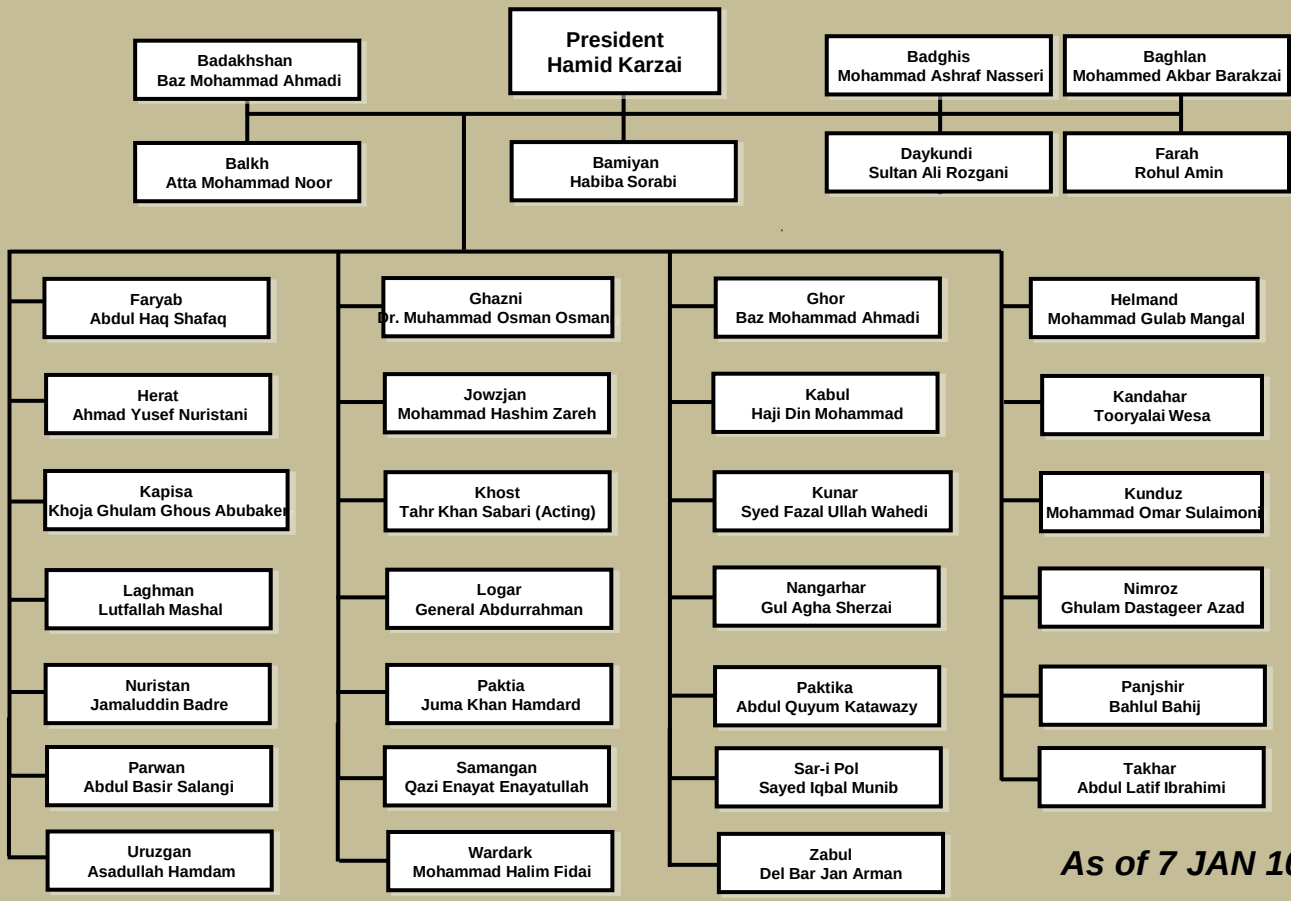


Dr. Zalmai Rassoul
Foreign Affairs Minister

Minister of Interior

Directorate of Security

Provincial Governors



As of 7 JAN 10



Kunar
Syed Fazal Ullah Wahedi



Ghazni
Dr. Osman Osmani



Kapisa
Khoja Ghulam Ghous Abubaker



Badghis
Mohammad Ashraf Nasseri



Balkh
Atta Mohammad Noor





Bamiyan
Habiba Sorabi



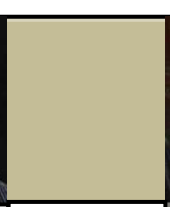
Kunar
Syed Fazal Ullah Wahedi



Farah
Rohul Amin



Nuristan
Jamaluddin Badre



Kabul
Dr. Zabi Mujaddydi



Paktia
Juma Khan Hamdard



Badakhshan
Baz Mohammad Ahmadi



Herat
Ahmad Yusef Nuristani



Kandahar
Tooryalai Wesa



Helmand
Mohammad Gulab Mangal



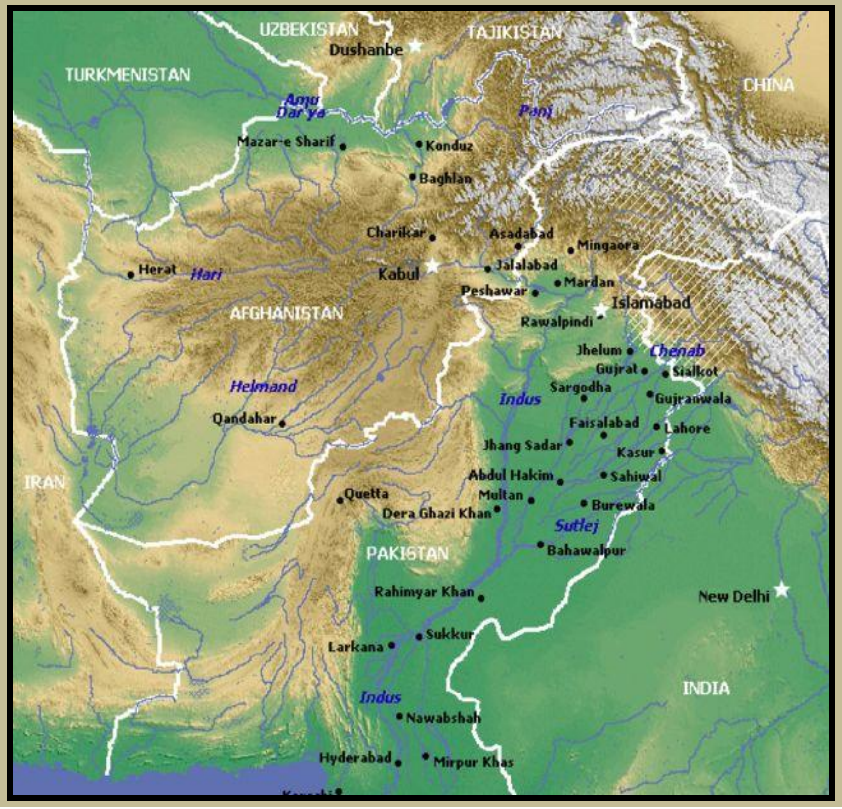
Nangarhar
Gul Agha Sherzai



Wardark
Mohammad Halim Fidai

COUNTRY DATA

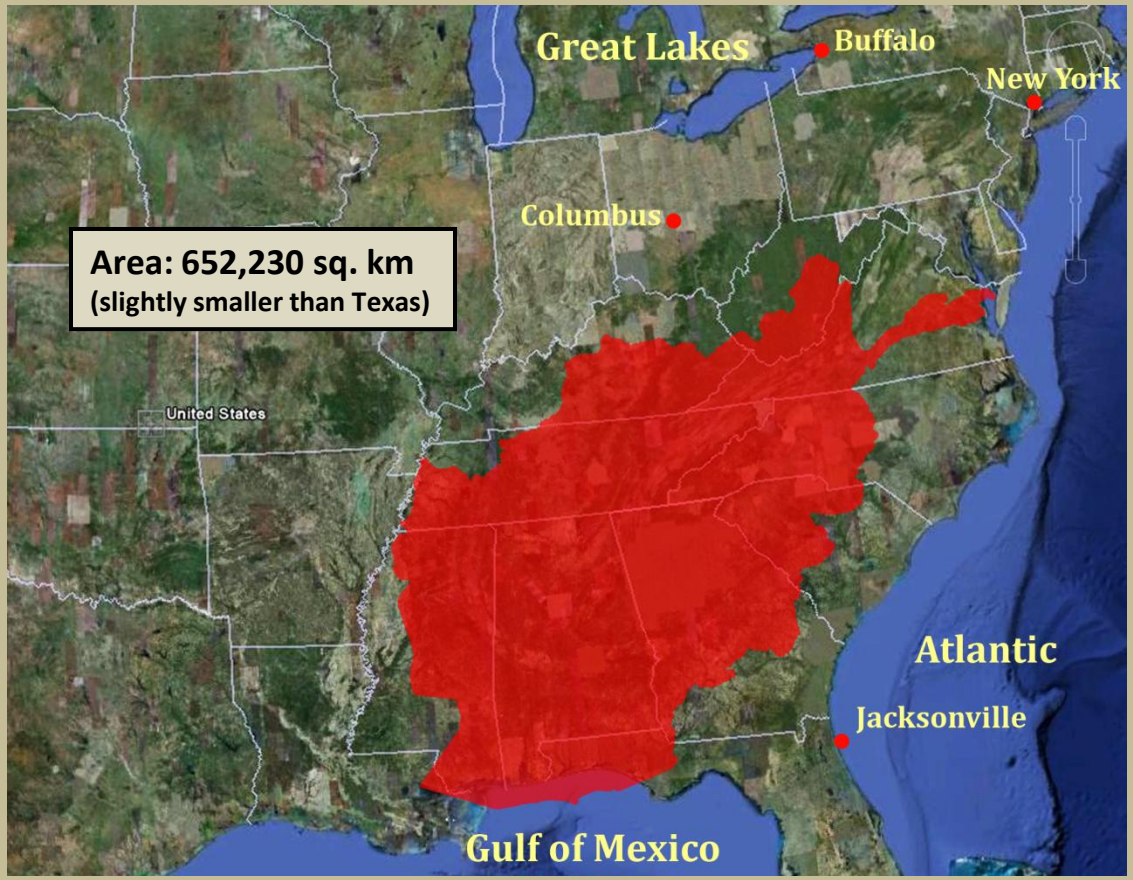
Location and Bordering Countries



Location:
South Central Asia, north and west of Pakistan, east of Iran

Border Countries:
- **China**
- **Iran**
- **Pakistan**
- **Tajikistan**
- **Turkmenistan**
- **Uzbekistan**

COMPARATIVE AREA



SOCIAL STATISTICS

Population:
28.396 Million (2009 est.)

0-14 years: 44.5%
(male 7,664,670/female 7,300,446)

15-64 years: 53%
(male 9,147,846/female 8,679,800)

65 years and over: 2.4%
(male 394,572/female 422,603) (2009 est.)

Total Fertility Rate:
6.53 children born/woman

Under-5 Mortality:
(m/f) 232/237 per 1000

Life Expectancy at Birth:
Total population: 44.64 yrs
Male: 44.47 yrs
Female: 44.81 yrs (2009 est.)

Literacy:
Age 15 and over can read and write
total pop.: 28.1%
male: 43.1%
female: 12.6% (2000 est.)

Average education years
total: 8 years
male: 11 years
female: 4 years (2004)

Percentage of population using improved drinking-water sources, 2006, total: 20%

GDP per capita: $700 (2008 est.)

Labor force: 15 million (2004 est.)

Unemployment Rate: 40%

Urban Population: 24% of total population

Economy Overview

- Wheat and cereal production along with fruit and nuts have long been Afghanistan's traditional agricultural mainstays
- Afghanistan is poor, landlocked, and dependent on foreign aid
- There is a shortage of housing, clean water, electricity, medical care, and jobs
- Other challenges include corruption and a huge illicit opium trade
- Agriculture: 80%, Industry: 10%, Services: 10% (2004 est.)
- Afghanistan has a wealth of natural resources to include: natural gas, petroleum, oil, marble, gold, copper, chromate, talc, barites, sulfur, lead, zinc, iron ore, and salt
- Exploration indicates abundant deposits of precious and semi precious gemstones, including emerald, ruby, sapphire, garnet, lapis, kunzite, spinel, tourmaline, and peridot; most mining and exportation of these precious and semi precious gems are illegal.
- Illegal and unregulated deforestation has depleted much of the country's timber industry and has left much of the once forested areas barren
- Afghan hand woven rugs are one of the more popular exports along with leather, furs, and hand crafted replica antiques
- Overall the economy of Afghanistan has improved significantly since 2002 due to the infusion of billions of US dollars and international aid
- Exchange rate: 1 $US = 50 Afghanis (AFs)

ECONOMY OVERVIEW CONT.

- **Afghanistan's economy remains weak as economic production is insufficient to generate sufficient personal incomes, to sustain an effective public sector or to finance its wide-ranging imports of finished goods and services.**

- **In addition to the continuing problems of security, low employment, poor labor productivity, a lack of capital and poor capital productivity, a lack of a comprehensive set of policies to encourage entrepreneurship requires special attention to turn the tide to encouraging.**
- **The Afghan economy has historically remained mostly agricultural in spite of the fact the country is only 12% arable and less than 6% is cultivated; there is almost no use of modern farming techniques to include: the use of farm equipment, chemical fertilizer, or pesticides; (although Northern Afghanistan has established a couple of such facilities) irrigation is primitive and totally dependent on the winter snows and seasonal rainfall; fruit and nuts exports average around $115 million a year but could easily be ten times that amount with an appropriate investment.**

- **Although security has been a major hindrance to Afghanistan's economic progress, the ability of the Afghan government to extend its reach throughout the country poses the biggest threat to future economic growth; illicit opium production and trade generates roughly 3 billion dollars a year and remains one of Kabul's major policy concerns.**

ECONOMY OVERVIEW CONT.

Afghanistan also has significant deposits of copper, iron ore, niobium, cobalt, gold, molybdenum, silver and aluminum, as well as sources of fluorspar, beryllium, lithium and other resources, according to research compiled by Brinkley's task force. Lithium and fossil fuels are not included in the $1 trillion estimate.

AFGHANISTAN'S SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY

REMINDER

An ISAF unit in a relatively permissive area had a difficult time maneuvering large vehicles along a road because it was lined with fruit trees. To improve mobility, the unit had the trees cut down. Many people in the village had their livelihoods destroyed. IEDs began appearing along the road shortly thereafter.

"We must demonstrate to the people and to the Taliban that Afghan, US and coalition forces are here to safeguard the Afghan people, and that we are in this to win."

-General David H. Petraeus
Commander, ISAF



Following Afghan Custom

In an Afghan village, in Paktia, U.S. troops mistakenly killed two pregnant women and three other innocent civilians. As a result a remarkable scene played out between an aggrieved father and the most senior special operations officer in the United States military.



Vice Admiral William McRaven, of the Joint Special Operations Command, showed up with two sheep.
The sheep were offered for sacrifice, as part of an Afghan custom for forgiveness.

In the Afghan code followed by southeastern Afghans, offering two sheep is the equivalent of begging for forgiveness.

"I came here today to send my condolences to you and to your family and to your friends. I also came today to ask your forgiveness for these terrible tragedies."

The father accepted McRaven's apology by saying, “Thank you very much. We will not keep anything in our heart against you.'"

History of Education

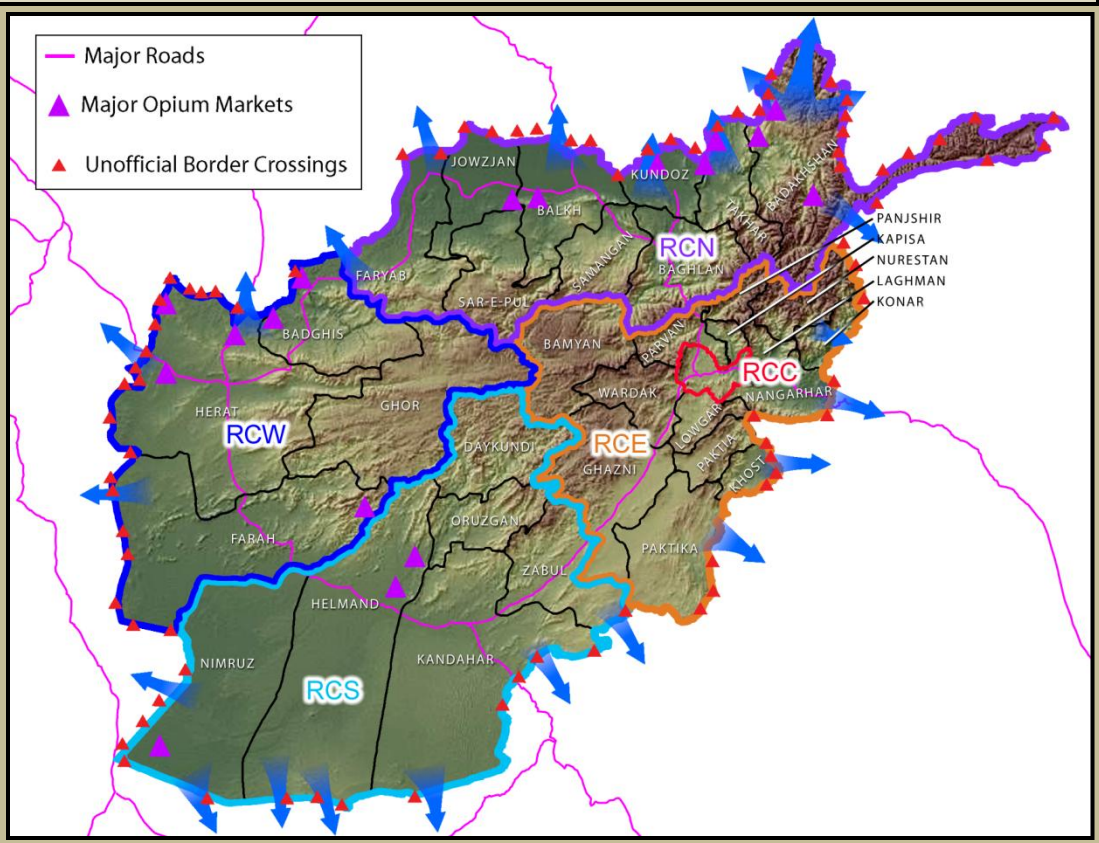
Archeological artifacts, monuments and traditions point to the earlier existence of education in Afghanistan. Schools were a mixture of traditional Masjid schooling and Western education. King Amanullah sent the first group of women to Turkey to be educated in 1919. In 1921, the first girls' school opened. Article 68 of the first constitution made elementary education compulsory. From 1927 to 1956 the number of elementary schools rose with enrollment reaching 121,000 students. These included co-ed elementary schools. Many high schools were also built in the 1950's and 1960's with the expertise and financial assistance of foreign countries, including the United States, France, and Germany. Dari and Pashtu were used as the medium of instruction. Kabul University opened in 1946 with many departments including Medicine, Law, Sciences, etc.
The branch of the Faculty of Medicine in Jalalabad was promoted to a university.

Currently, the Ministry of Education reports 5.4 million children (35% girls) are enrolled in schools. Despite efforts by the Taliban to burn and shut down schools, more Afghans attend school now than anytime in modern history. Following is the picture of the first Afghan girl in 2002. Photo: courtesy of Yasin Khosti

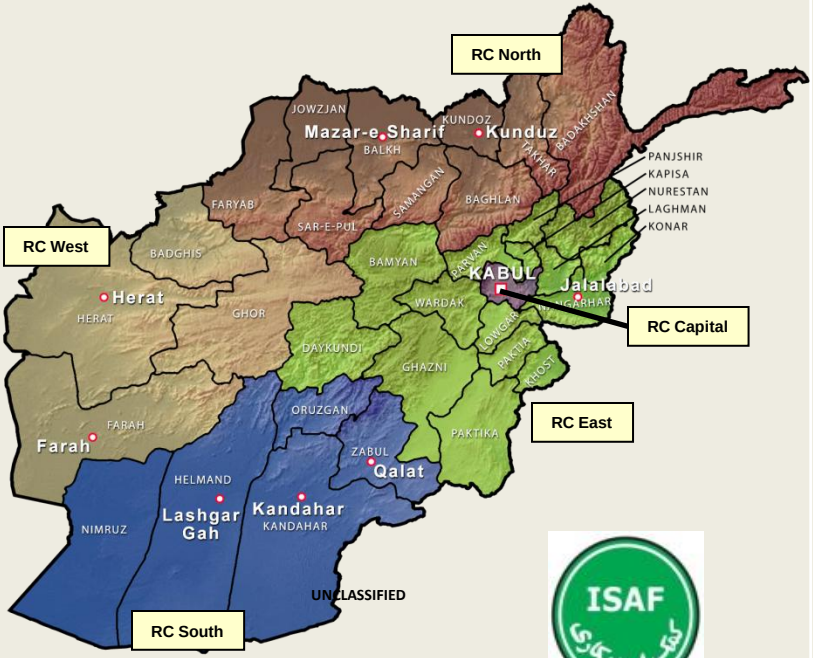


Military Operational Environment

Terrain & Major Lines of Communications by ISAF RC

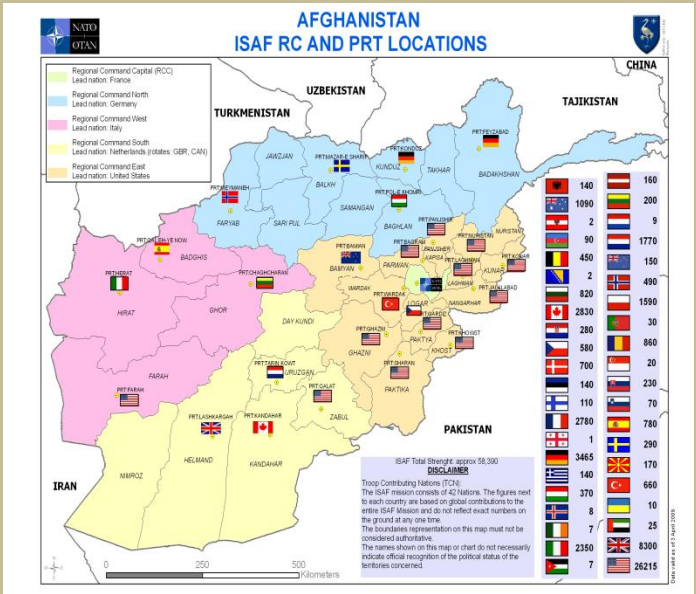


International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Missions



- Conduct security and stability operations
- Support the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)
- Disarm illegally armed groups
- Facilitate ammunition depots managements
- Reconstruction and development
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Governance
- Counter-narcotics

ISAF PRT LOCATIONS



Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT)

- **26 PRTs, each commanded by a military officer (usually a LTC)**
- **Includes:**
 - **-Military Component (Civil Affairs/Force Protection)**
 - **-Civilian Police Advisors**
 - **-Civilian representatives of US (or other national) government foreign agencies**

Focus is on development, reconstruction and extending the reach of the central government into the provinces.

Afghan National Army

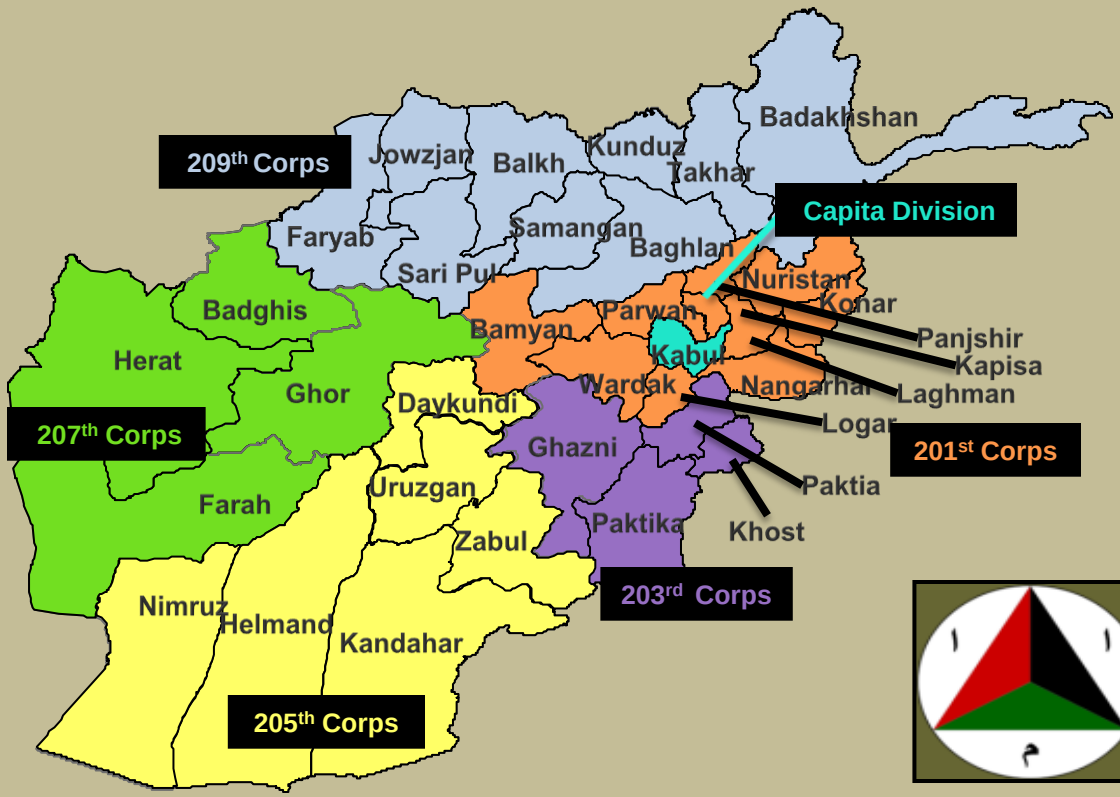
Afghan National Army (ANA)

- **Strength: 97,000 troops (as of January 2010)**
- **Target Strength: 240,000 (within five years)**
- **Capacity: participates in 90% of ISAF operations and leads 62% of joint operations**
- **Well respected by the Afghan population**

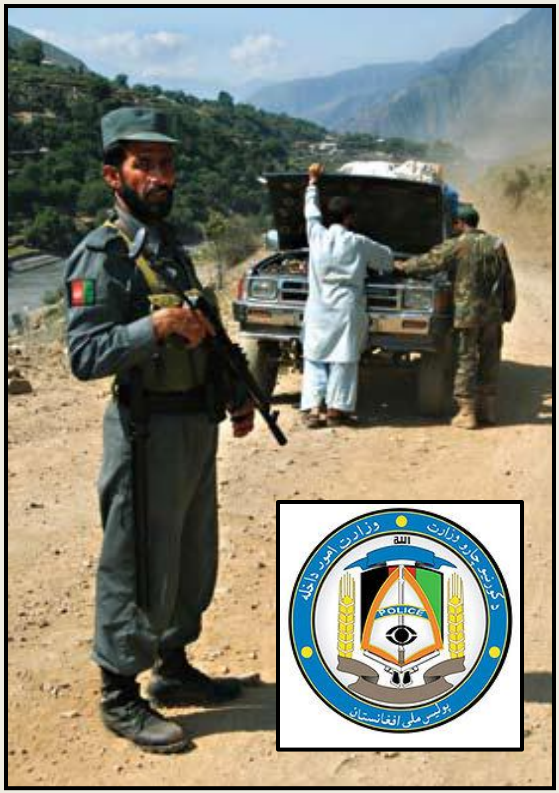




ANA Command Areas of Responsibility



AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE

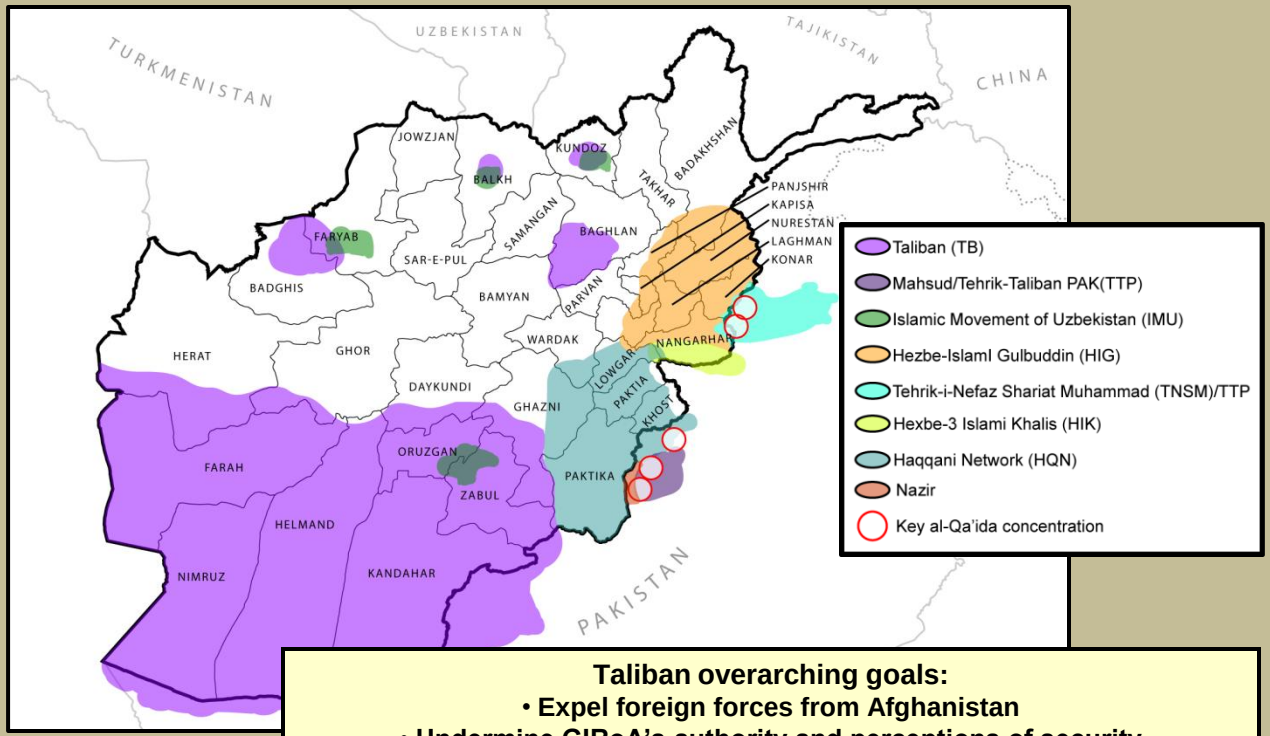


Afghan National Police (ANP)

- **Strength: 94,000 (as of January 2010)**
- **Target Strength: 134,000 (within five years)**
- **Composition of the ANP**
 - **Afghan Uniformed Police**
 - **Afghan Border Police**
 - **Afghan National Civil Order Police**
 - **Afghan Counter-Narcotics Police**
- **Viewed as corrupt; are known to extort the local population; generally not trusted**



INSURGENCY OVERVIEW



Taliban overarching goals:

- **Expel foreign forces from Afghanistan**
- **Undermine GIRoA's authority and perceptions of security**
- **Establish a Sunni state under Taliban Supreme Leader Mullah Omar**

Afghan Taliban Intent

Taliban Code of Conduct published by Taliban leadership, mid July 2009

(Mullah Omar's COIN guidance – a population-centric strategy)

"This is our mission: to keep people and their property safe. Do not let those people that love money take our local people's property and cause them problems."

"Keep good relationships with your friends and the local people, and do not let the enemy divide / separate you."

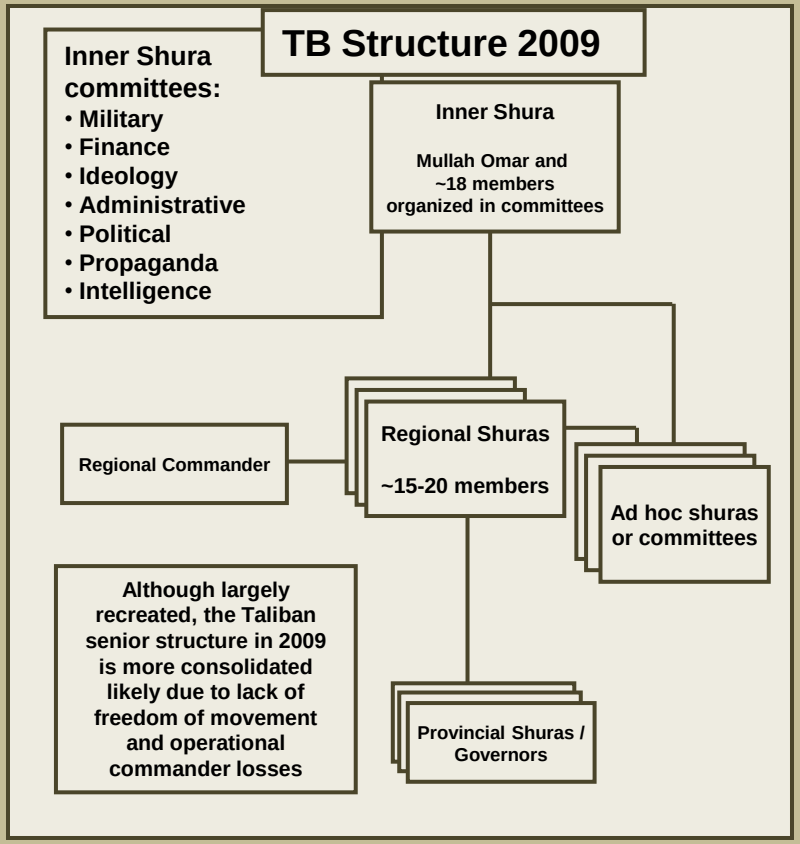
Intentions

- We don't have to beat ISAF militarily, just outlast international will to remain in Afghanistan
- Continue population outreach and protection programs
- Continue successful asymmetric operations
- Expand lethal IED and high-profile attacks to deny ISAF freedom of movement
- Emphasize increasing violence in RC North and RC West
- Demonstrate Taliban reach and perceived control of all Afghanistan
- Make the main enemy the United States

Directives

- Reiterated prohibitions on the following:
 - Mistreating population
 - Forcibly taking personal weapons
 - Taking children to conduct jihad
 - Punishment by maiming
 - Forcing people to pay donations
 - Searching homes
 - Kidnapping people for money

Taliban Governance



- **Inner Shura:** Supreme ruling body; decisions based on consensus and within Omar's guidance
- **Regional Shura / Committees:** Direct and oversee policy; limited decision-making authority
- **Provincial Shura:** Enforces and implements directives; represents local concerns

* Decision delays as fighters require guidance from smaller core of TBSL decision-makers

FATA – NWFP of Pakistan

Federally Administrated Tribal Areas- FATA

North-West Frontier Province- NWFP



FATA: Taliban Safe Haven

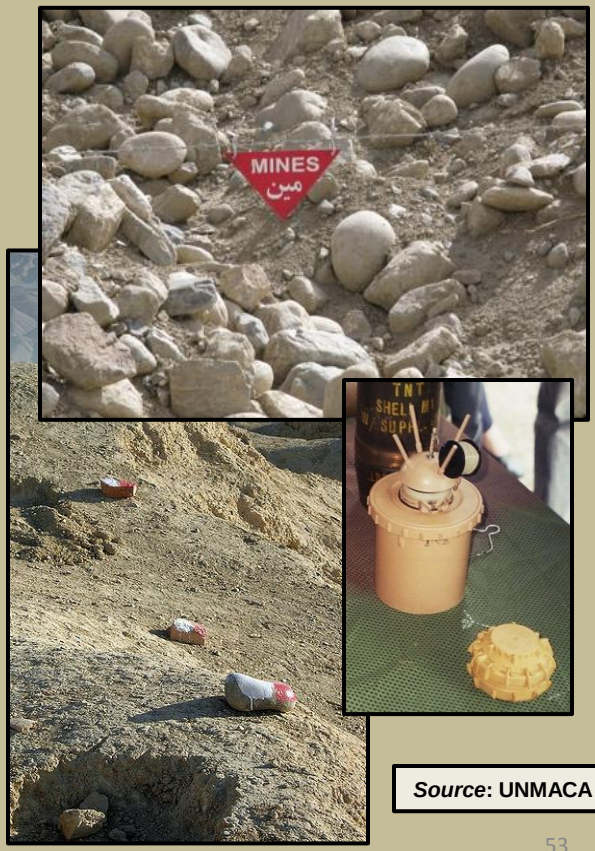
- Made up of seven tribal agencies (Khyber, Kurram, Orazkai, Mohmand, Bajaur, North and South Waziristan)
- 3 million tribesmen of FATA are part of the 28 million Pashtuns in Pakistan (15 million Pashtuns in Afghanistan
- Development, literacy, and health facilities are low
 - Per capita income US $500
 - Literacy rate: 17% (3% for females)
 - Madaris (some built with Al Qaeda money) are a primary means of education and remain popular
- Tribes on both sides of border intermarry, trade, feud, celebrate with one another; adhere to Pashtunwali

TALIBAN SAFE HAVEN CONT.

- **FATA tribes more rigid and conservative due to a uniquely oppressive administrative system**
 - **Ruled directly by the Pakistani President whose agent is the Governor of the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP)**
 - **Governor appoints "political agents" to each agency**
 - **Agents adhere to the "Frontier Crimes Regulation" (FCR), a legacy of British colonialism**
 - **FCR gave no constitutional, civic, or political rights to FATA tribesmen**
 - **FATA traditionally off limits to journalists, NGOs, human rights organizations and political parties**
 - **Mullahs and de facto religious parties have filled the void**
- **Since the fall of the Taliban in neighboring Afghanistan, the area has been destabilized as Pakistani Intelligence (ISI) used FATA as a safe haven for Taliban reconstitution and later as a staging area for Taliban recruitment, training and operations in Afghanistan.**

LANDMINES

- Mines have killed and/or maimed about 150,000 Afghans since 1989
- Every month 55-60 people fall victim to landmines
- 32 of 34 provinces affected
- Mined areas marked by signs and/or red painted rocks
- Adversely effects nomadic migratory tribes such as the Kuchi

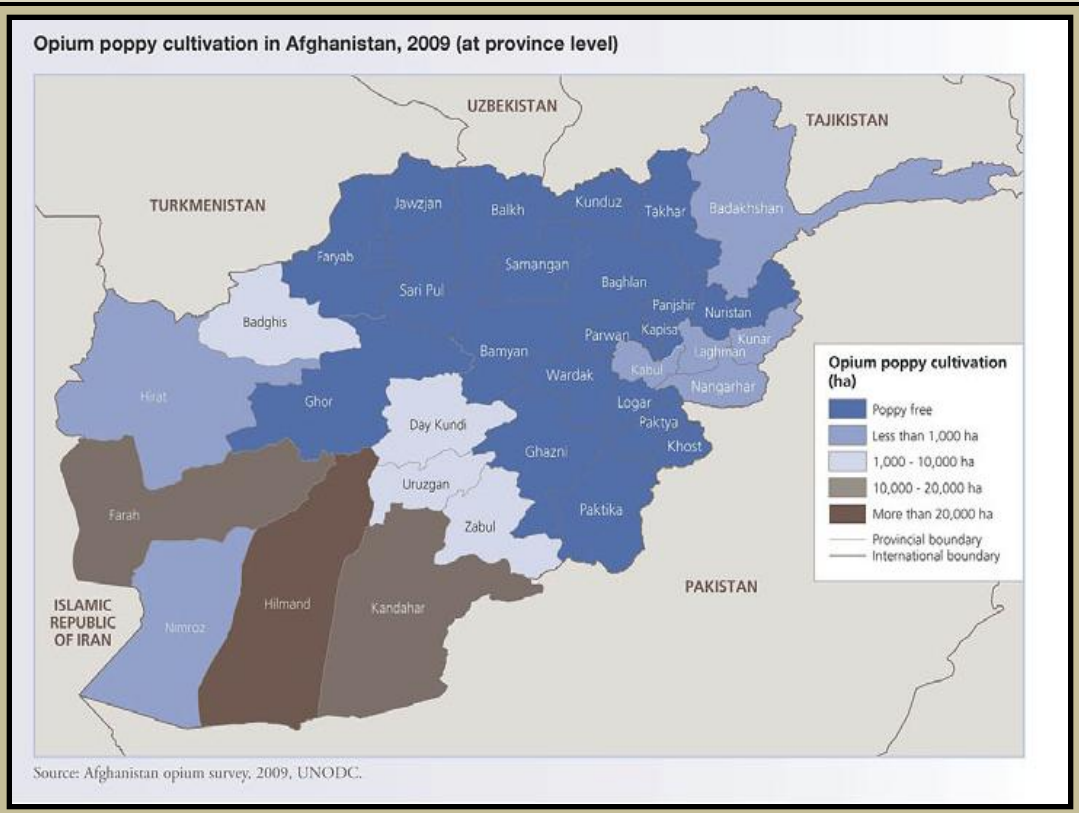


Source: UNMACA

Opium Poppies in Afghanistan



OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION



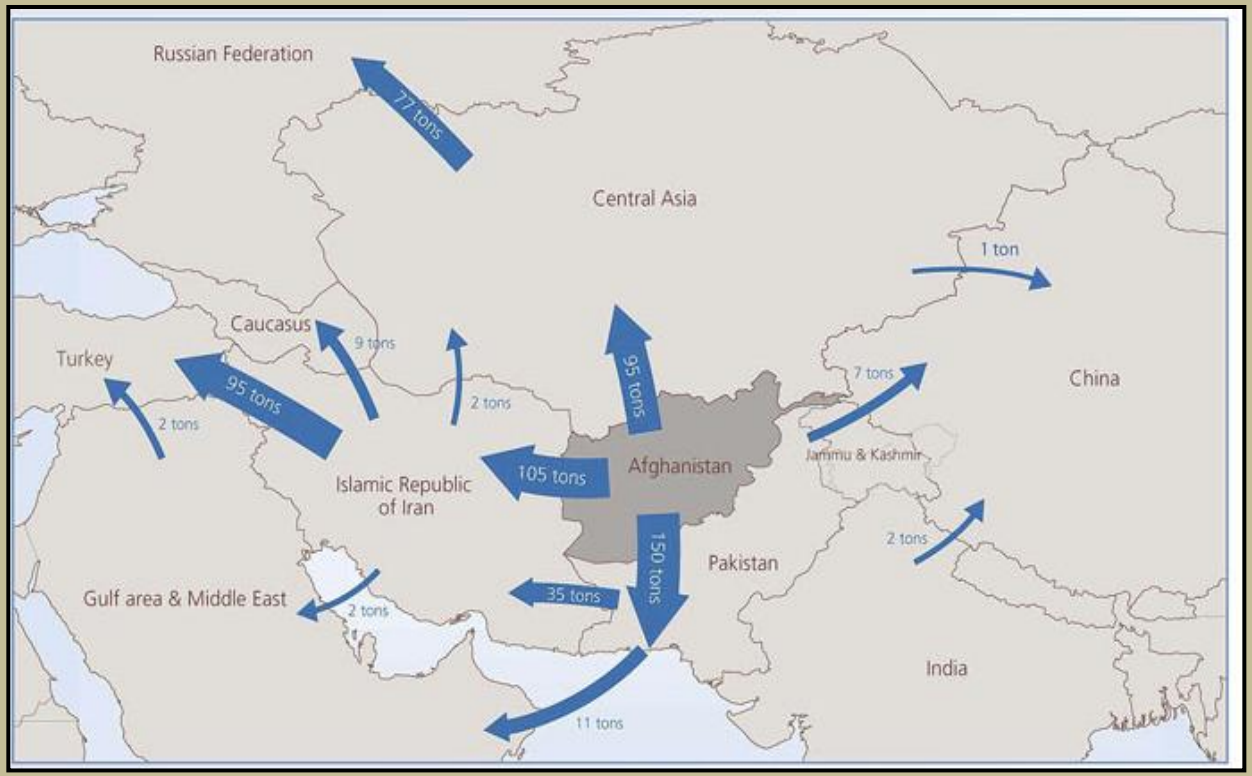
Source: Afghanistan opium survey, 2009, UNODC.

AFGHANISTAN'S OPIUM PROBLEM

- **Afghanistan now produces around 93% of the world's opiates, more than twice the world's demand; one province, Helmand, has recently produced 50%**
- **Many opium farmers work land owned by rich landowners who often don't live in the area or even the country; sometimes they prevent the farmers from growing anything else, under threat of eviction or worse**
- **Government poppy eradication attempts have often targeted farmers who are unable to pay bribes or are competing with poppy fields under the control of more powerful parties**
- **Extreme poppy eradication methods, such as spraying poppy fields, could drive farmers into the hands of the insurgents**



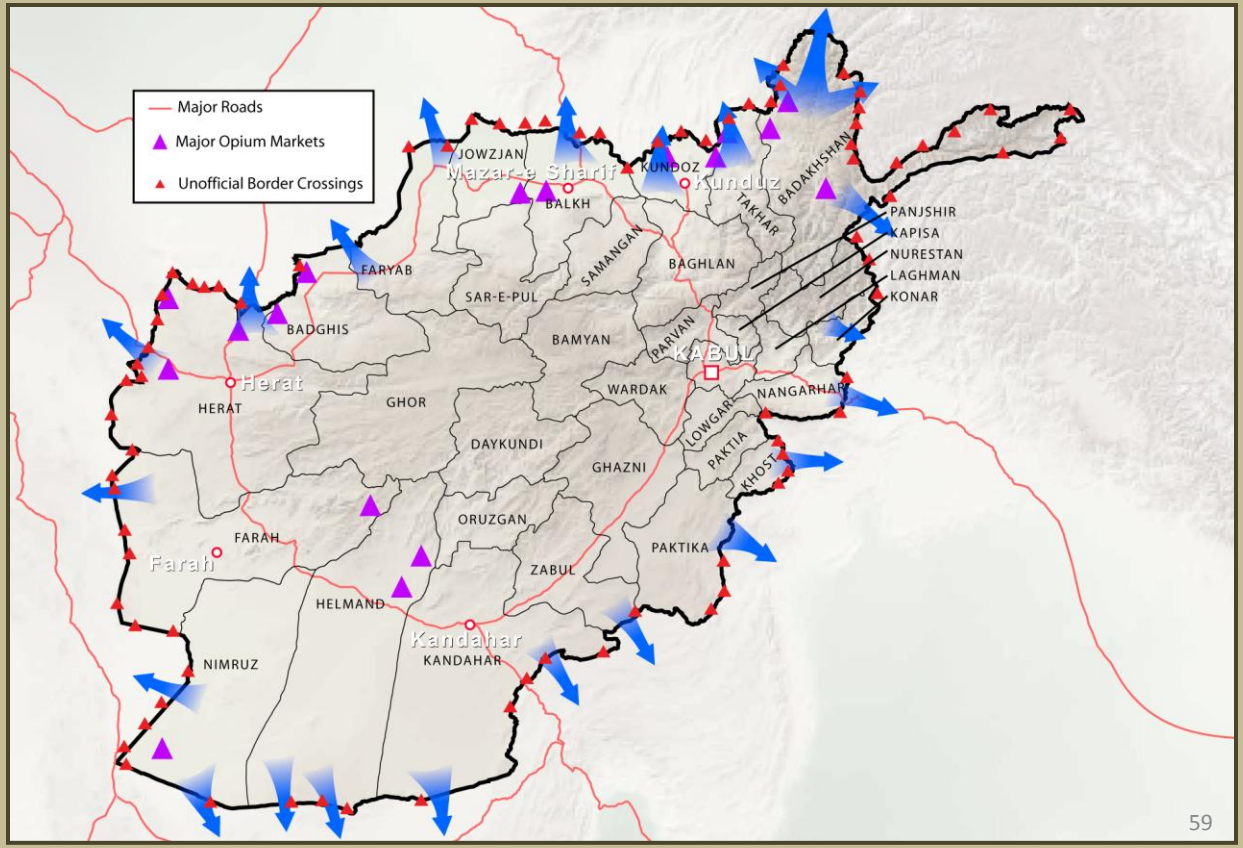
Regional Heroin Flows From Afghanistan, 2008 (Source: UNODC)



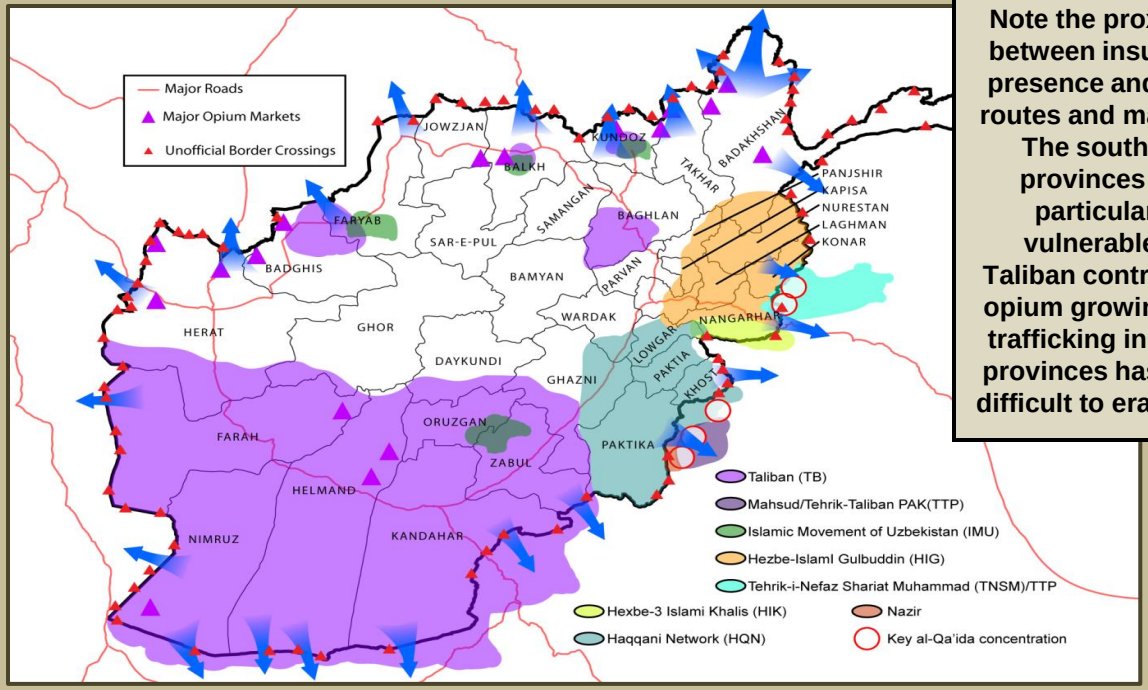
Regional Opium Facts

- Opium crop takes 4 months to mature and requires little water or care
- Ten kilograms of opium paste produces one kilogram of heroin
- In 1987 Pakistan produced 70% of the world's heroin supply
- With US assistance, Pakistan nearly eradicated poppy cultivation
- Due to agricultural destruction (particularly of irrigation works) during the Soviet-Afghan and Afghan Civil Wars, opium production dramatically increased in Afghanistan in the 1990s
- Taliban taxed both the production (*usher*) and trafficking (*zakat*) of opium
- Taliban banned poppy cultivation in 2001 in order to increase prices
- Afghan farmers receive 20% of the revenue from drugs; traffickers receive 80%
- Roughly 170,000 Afghans (to include 30,000 women) are heroin addicts
- 3% of Iran's population over the age of 15 are heroin addicts
- Nearly half of Iran's 170,000 prisoners are held on drug related offenses
- Since 1990, some 3,000 Iranian security officials have been killed in battles against traffickers

Opium Export Routes



Opium Export Routes and Insurgency



Note the proximity between insurgent presence and drug routes and markets. The southern provinces are particularly vulnerable to Taliban control; the opium growing and trafficking in these provinces has been difficult to eradicate.

Culture and Communication

Victory of the Muslim Nation Parade in front of Mosque, Kabul

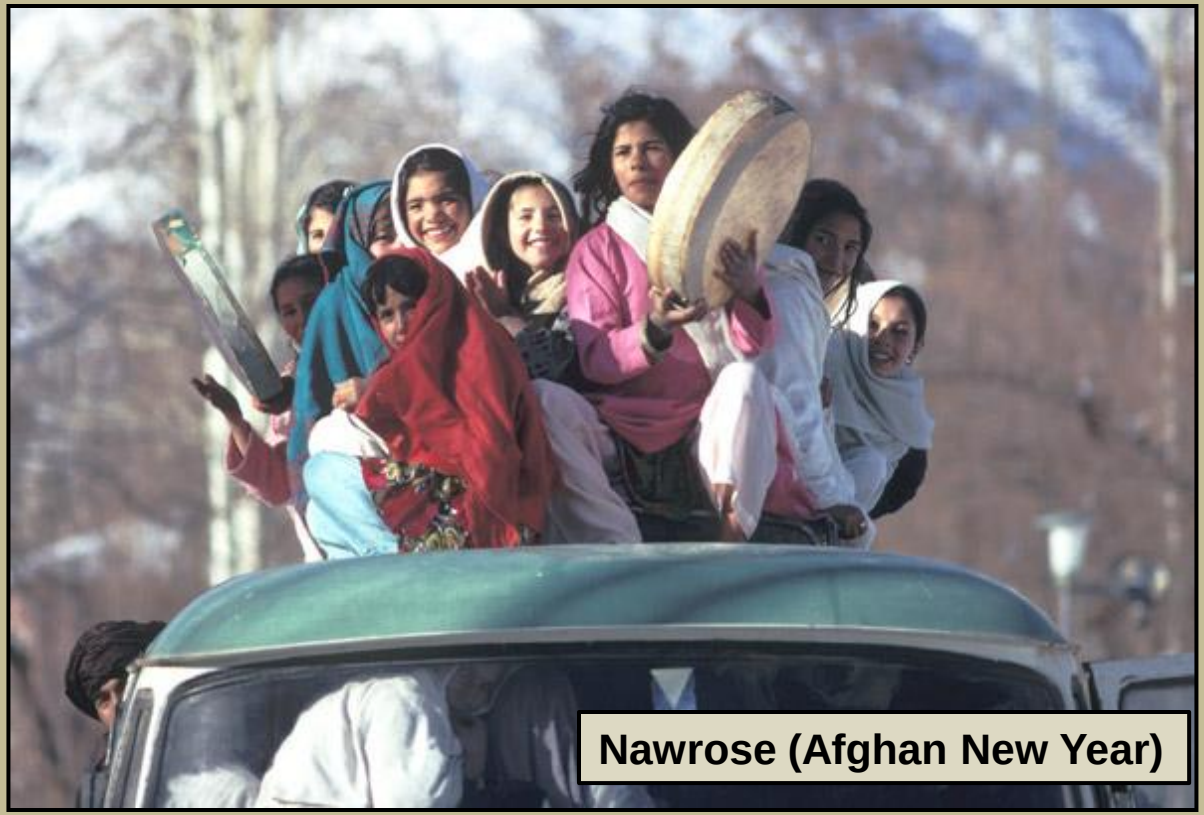


HOLIDAYS (dates for 2011)

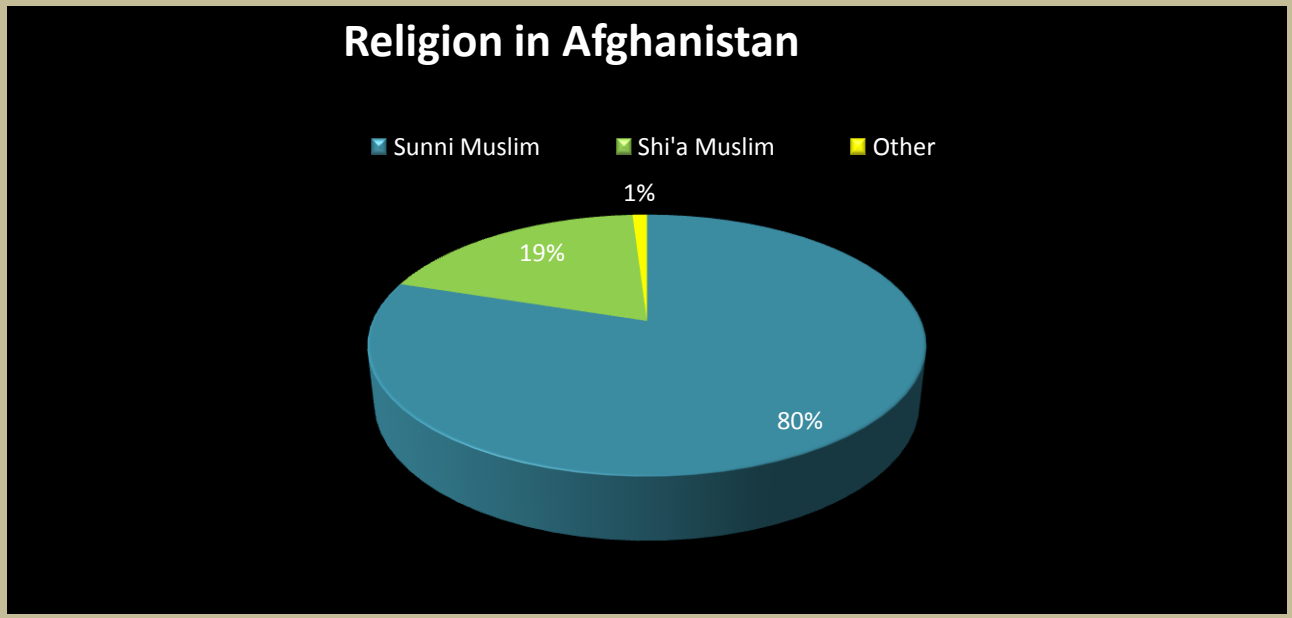
- **15 Feb: Mawlud al-Nabi (Birth of the Prophet Muhammad)**
- **21 Mar: Nawrose (Afghan New Year)**
- **28 Apr: Victory of the Muslim Nation (Withdrawal of Soviet Forces)**
- **01 May: Labor Day**
- **19 Aug: National Day (Independent Sovereignty from Britain)**
- **09 Sep: Masood Day, commemorating the assassination of Northern Alliance leader General Ahmad Shah Masood**
- **30 Aug: Eid al-Fitr (After a month of fasting, Afghans visit and/or entertain their families, friends and give gifts)**
- **6 Nov: Eid-al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice — commemorates the Prophet Abraham's devotion to God)**
- **5 Dec: Ashura (Shi'a day of mourning commemorating the martyrdom of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson Husein Ibn Ali at the Battle of Karbala in 680 C.E.)**

Note: The week prior to Eid al-Fitr is an appropriate time to provide performance or other types of bonuses to Afghan national employees such as interpreters/translators; dates for religious holidays are approximated; each year the holidays are adjusted to the lunar calendar

Afghans Celebrating Nawrose



Nawrose (Afghan New Year)



- **Majority of Afghan Muslims are Sunni of the Hanafi School of thought (Hanafi is the oldest, largest, and most liberal of the four main schools of Sunni Islam)**
- **Shi'as in Afghanistan are "Twelvers" along with smaller numbers of Ismaillis; most are from the Hazara and Qizilbash groups**
- **Sufism, a mystical school of Islam, is practiced by many Afghan Sunni and Shi'a Muslims in a form unique to Afghanistan**
- **Islam in Afghanistan can include many local superstitions such as the use of folk medicines and remedies**

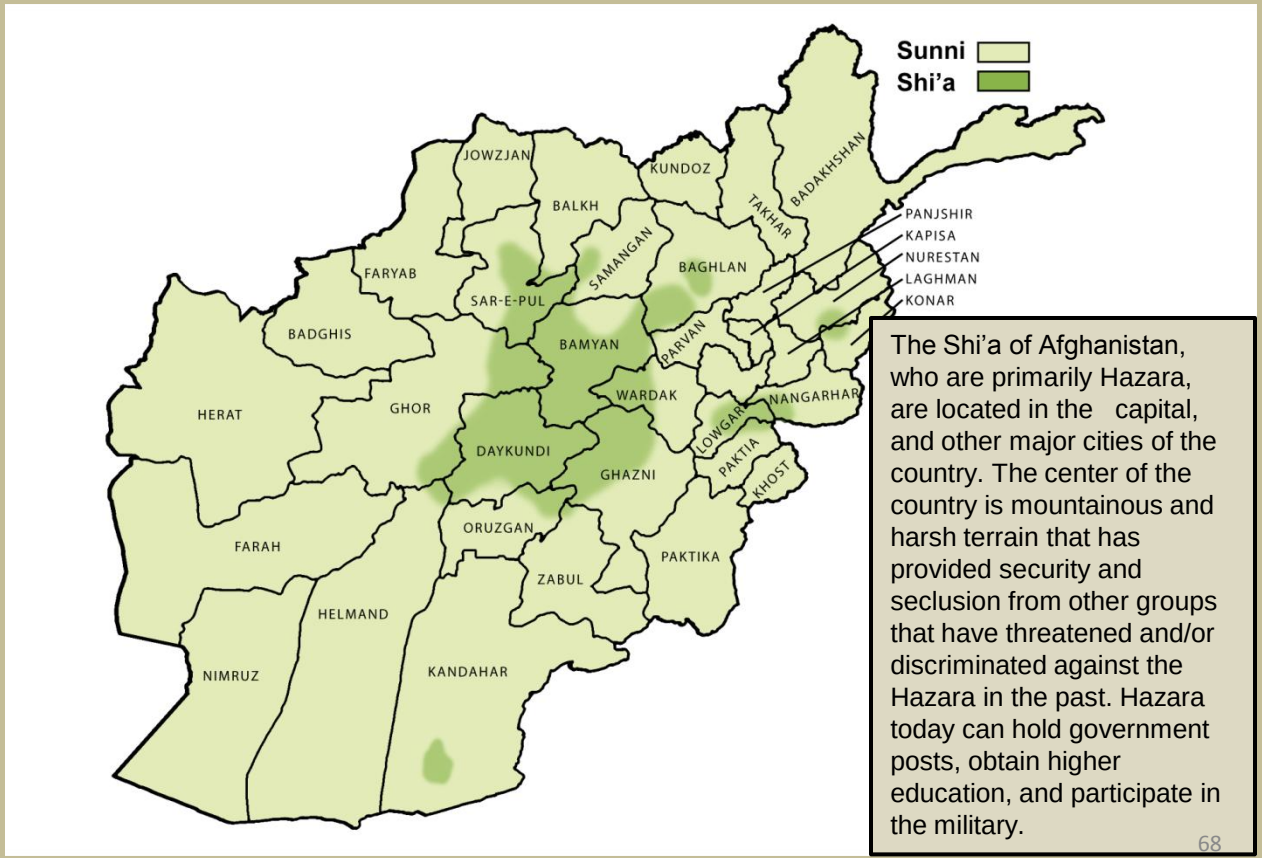
ISLAM

- **Abrahamic religion-shares roots with Judaism and Christianity**
- **Qur'an holy book – infallible authority**
- **Five Pillars: Testimony of faith (Kalima or*Shahada*), Prayer (Namaaz or*Salat*), Charity (*Zakat*), Fasting during month of Ramadan (Roasa or *Sawm*) and Pilgrimage to Mecca (*Hajj*)**
- **Other Beliefs: Faith (Eamaan or *Iman*), Oneness of God (*Tawhid*), Prophets, Angels, Judgment Day, the Books (Qur'an, Bible, Torah), Fate and Predestination**
- **Division between Sunni and Shi'a not as important as ethnic/tribal differences although it is changing for political gains.**
- **Pervasive part of daily life – Prayer 5x/day, education, Friday mosque gatherings**

ISLAM CONT.

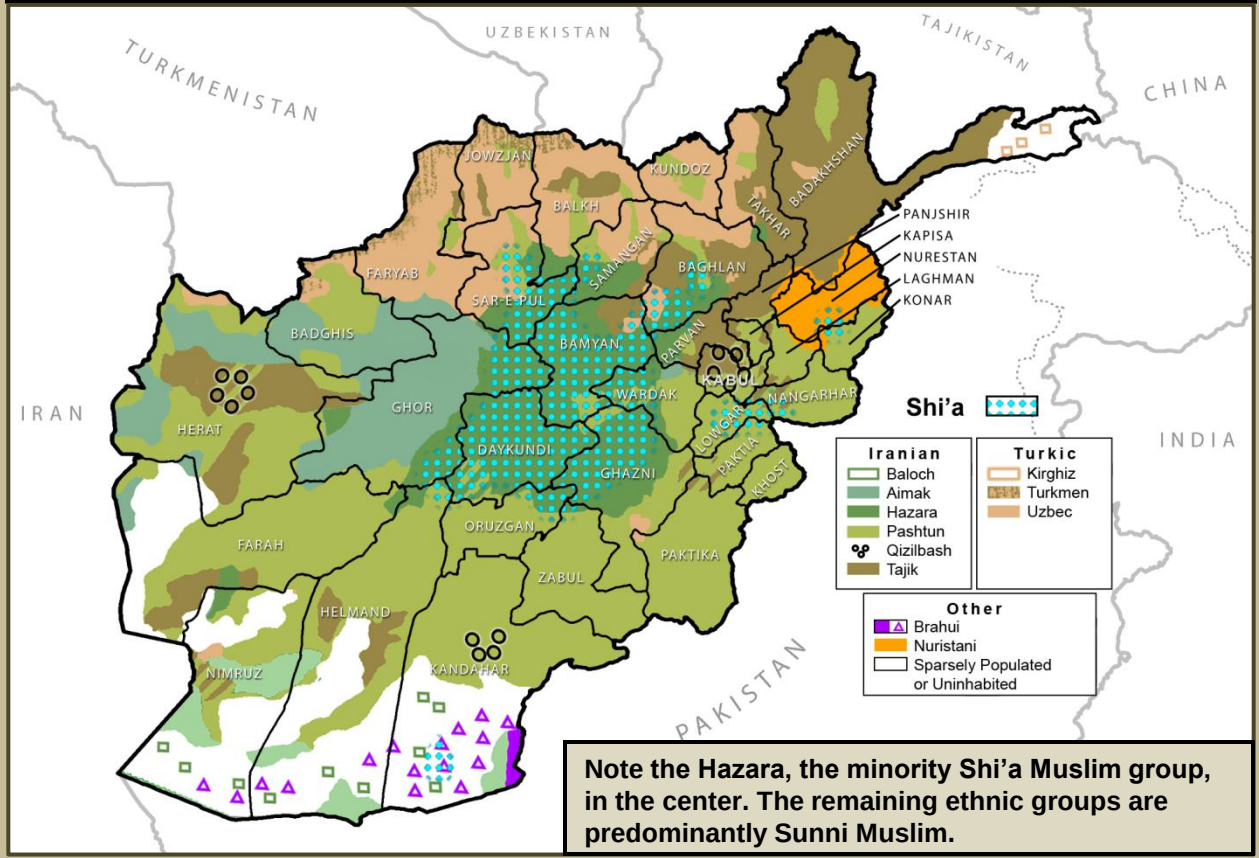
- **Religious figures (*mullahs*) respected and influential**
 - **The Mullah is a religious leader or teacher**
 - **Most are qualified by their ability to quote the Holy Koran from memory**
 - **Often times the Mullah retains the role of a leader who arbitrates local disputes based of Islamic principles, and teaches Islamic law and doctrine**
- **Literacy issues: misinterpretation; opportunity for perceived religious authorities to mislead those who cannot read.**

DISTRIBUTION OF SHI'A AND SUNNI



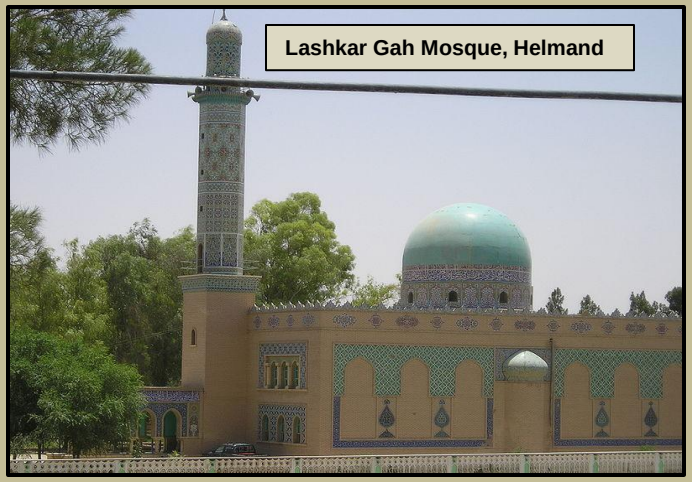
The Shi'a of Afghanistan, who are primarily Hazara, are located in the capital, and other major cities of the country. The center of the country is mountainous and harsh terrain that has provided security and seclusion from other groups that have threatened and/or discriminated against the Hazara in the past. Hazara today can hold government posts, obtain higher education, and participate in the military.

Ethnolinguistic Groups and Islamic Sects

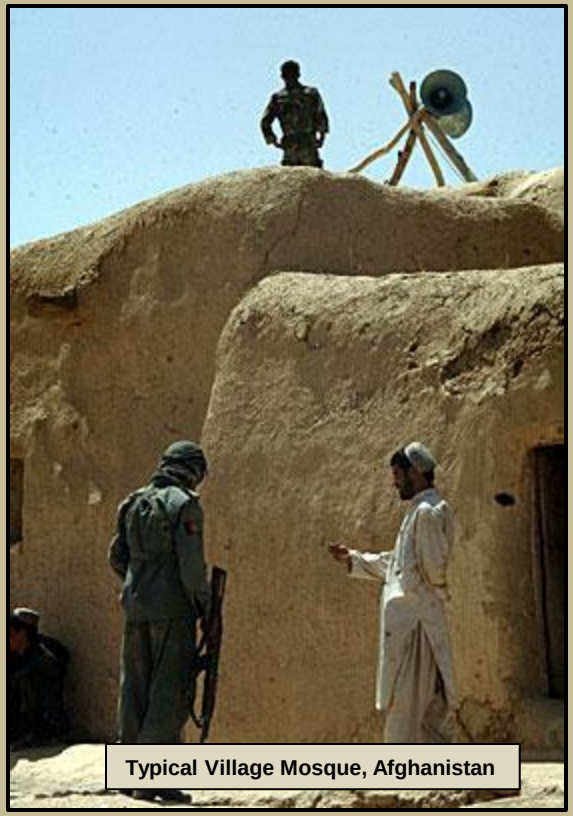


Note the Hazara, the minority Shi'a Muslim group, in the center. The remaining ethnic groups are predominantly Sunni Muslim.

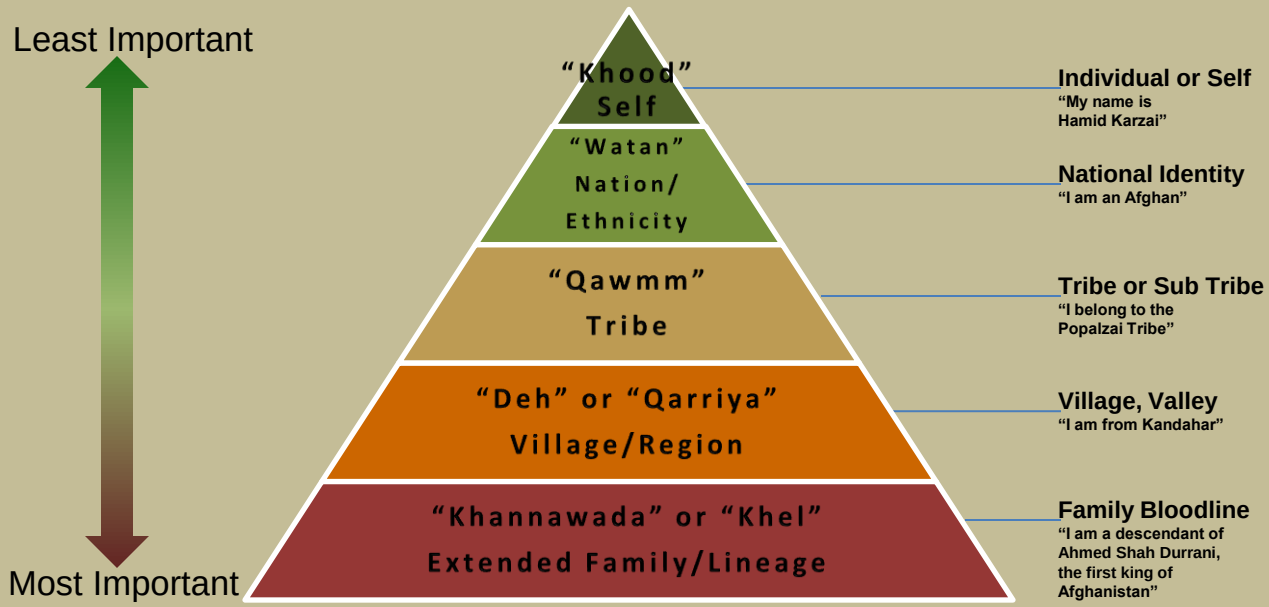
Mosques in Afghanistan


Lashkar Gah Mosque, Helmand


Masjid (Mosque) Jami, Herat

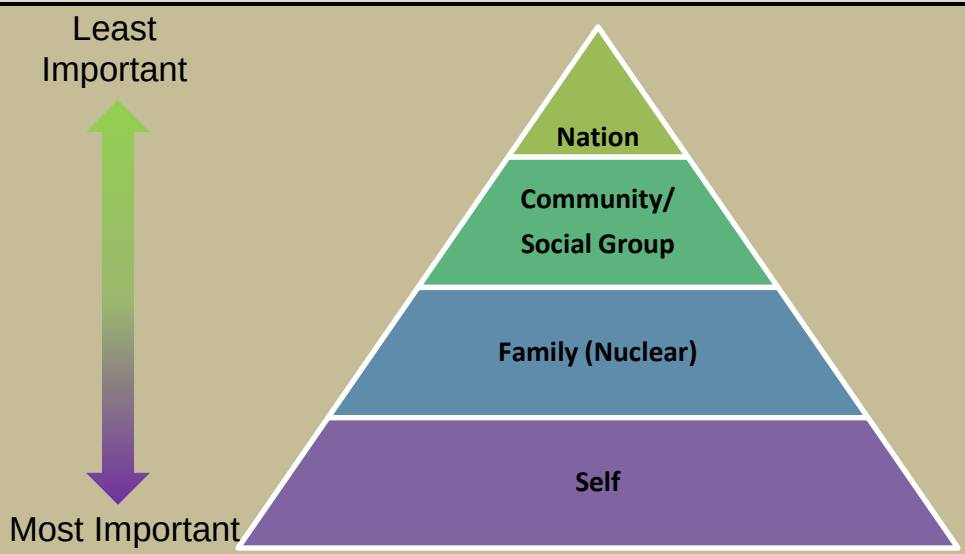

Typical Village Mosque, Afghanistan

Afghan Identity
Loyalty and Decision-Making



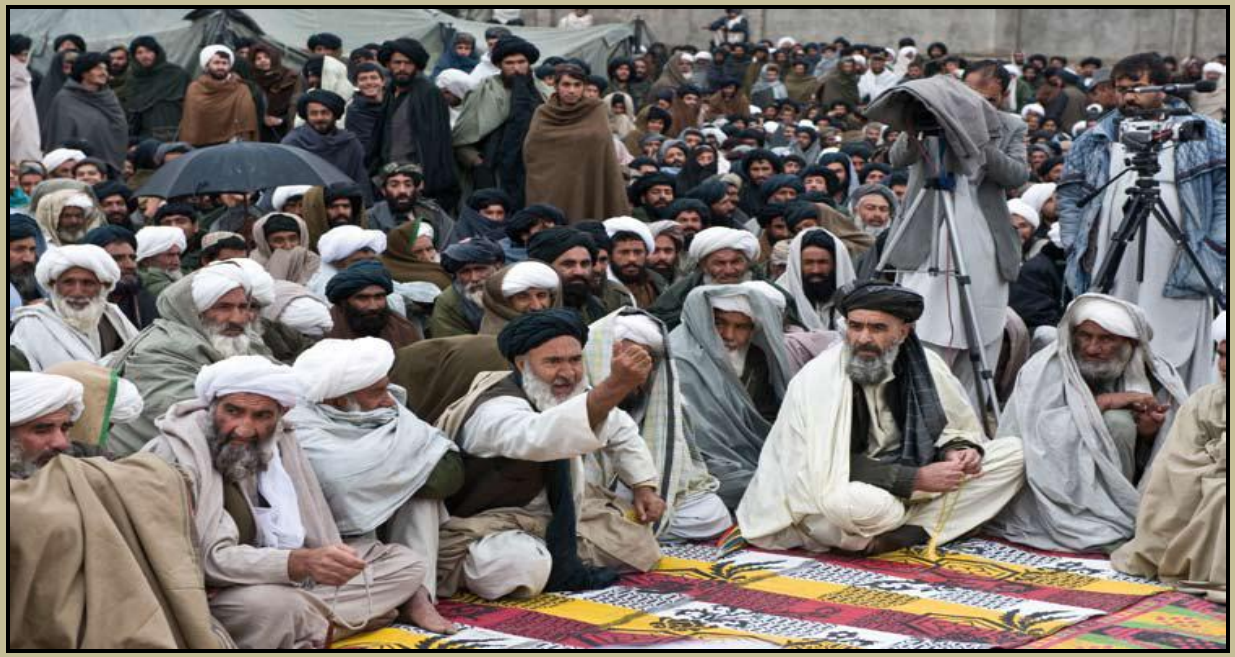
Allegiance is given to family above all other social groupings; family is also the main source of an Afghan's identity and is the primary factor in decision-making. Ethnic groups, tribes, and community define one's loyalty. Self is the least important consideration in such a collective society.

American Identity



While Afghan society is in general collective and group-oriented, individualism and independence are characteristic of American culture and permeate most aspects of American society. Independence is of great value in America, and Americans place emphasis on individual liberties and personal freedoms. In general, in America, the individual represents himselves, and family ties usually carry less significance in America than they would in Afghanistan. The nuclear family, more often than the extended family, serves as the primary support for most individuals in America, but individuals are expected at some point in their early adult life to support themselves. Additionally, in America an individual's social network is an important factor which creates their identity. Americans share a strong sense of national unity.

Afghan Shura or Tribal Counsel



It is important for the soldier to realize that Afghans are a tribal society and that individual Afghans (regardless of position) often times cannot make decisions for the tribe. The "Shura" is an older and highly successful form of democracy that has been used for centuries in Afghanistan to solve problems and reach agreement /consensus within the tribe. Attending these Shuras are an incredibly important way to meet with tribal leaders who can make decisions and implement change. But most importantly it is a great opportunity for soldiers to build relationships of trust and foster cooperation with Afghans.

Afghan Psyche and Behavior

Influences and corresponding mindsets/behaviors

- **Recent history of conflict:** Suspicion, warrior mentality, basic survival, uncertainty
 - **Soviet Invasion and Mujahideen**: Many Afghans refer to this time period as an example of their strength; it is a source of pride and glory and also fueled ongoing suspicion of outside forces and their objectives.
 - **Civil War**: After the Soviet withdrawal, fighting amongst Afghan ethnic groups for control of the country increased sectarianism , resulting in a significant decline in an already weak sense of nationalism.
 - **Taliban**: Due to the incredibly anarchic situation during the Afghan Civil War, the Taliban were initially welcomed by the majority of hopeful Afghans. This sense of hope, however, turned into betrayal when the Taliban government turned inward, repressive, and was seen as detrimental to the people. This betrayal has resulted in a mindset of distrust towards government.
 - **Current situation**: With the defeat of the Taliban, Afghans expected improvements to their lives through the assistance of the international community. Almost a decade after the Taliban, the standard of living has not measurably improved. As the national government , which is backed by the US and NATO partner countries, is increasingly seen as corrupt, the sense of disappointment has resulted in a population often ambivalent to all sides.

Afghan Psyche and Behavior

Influences and corresponding mindsets/behaviors continued

- **Religion:** "Insha'allah" attitude
 - **Fatalism**: Religion is often used as a source of comfort in a situation where many Afghans live in poverty; fatalism provides a way to cope with a lack of food, clean water, security, and healthcare.
 - **Islam a source of guidance:** Problems within a family or community are often resolved by consulting religious texts or those who are familiar with the texts; a religious leader is often the source consulted due to the high rate of illiteracy.
 - **Most are not extremist:** The majority of Afghans are not extremist, but are religiously conservative; extremism that does exist is a result of the Soviet-Afghan War and the importation of Al Qaeda ideology.
- **Traditional Afghan values:** Hospitality, Honor, Family
 - Regardless of past and present events, most Afghans are committed to maintaining their traditional values and customs.
 - **Hospitality** is a trademark of Afghan culture; regardless of their opinion of a person, they will be hospitable.
 - **Honor** is a common Afghan value behind behaviors such as: saving face, not saying "no," being hospitable and giving, and guarding the virtue of female family members.
 - **Family** is the priority for most Afghans and is often the driving force behind many of their actions. An Afghan family extends beyond husband and wife.

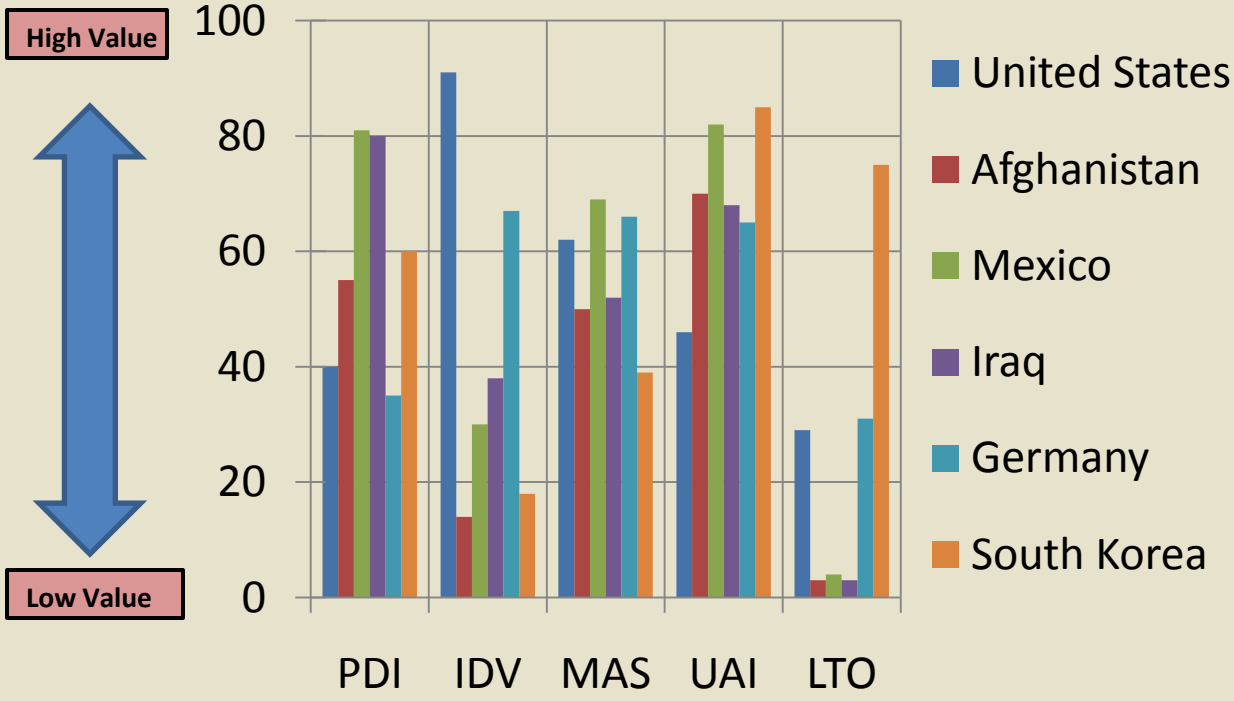
Geert Hofstede's Five Dimensions of Culture

- **Low vs. High Power Distance**
 - **Afghanistan is a high power society as members do not see themselves as equals but subject to those in power**
- **Individualism vs. Collectivism**
 - **Falling under a tribe or ethnic group would define Afghans as a collective society; individuals answer to the tribe as a whole**
- **Masculine vs. Femininity**
 - **Afghanistan is very much a masculine society where competition, assertiveness and power play a crucial role in every day life; women play a subordinate role in this society, unless educated.**
- **Low vs. High Uncertainty Avoidance**
 - **A high uncertainty avoidance society prefers rules and structured activities like tribal laws and religious values to dictate daily life; superstitions can also play a role**
- **Long vs. Short Term Orientation**
 - **Afghanistan is a short term oriented society where saving face, respect for tradition, and immediate stability are important**

Application of the Five Dimensions of Culture

- **High Power Distance**
 - **It is critical to identify the power broker of a community, whether it be the local mullah, tribal elder, politician, or businessman; directly dealing in a positive manner with those with power will increase the effectiveness of meetings and negotiations**
- **Collective Society**
 - **For any decisions of significance, expect a consensus approach that may require patience on the part of Soldiers**
- **Masculine Society**
 - **In Afghanistan, men and women have very distinct gender roles and norms of interaction that may not conform to Western values; consult your Rules of Interaction should any situations of concern arise**
- **High Uncertainty Avoidance**
 - **Soldiers should attempt to provide full explanations, assurances, and demonstrate beneficial outcomes when introducing new concepts. It is also advisable to arrange meetings that do not disrupt daily religious and cultural rituals, such as prayer**
- **Short Term Orientation**
 - **At the end of a meeting, do not expect command decisions to be made in a timely manner**

Hofstede's Cultural Value Country Comparison



PDI - Power Distance Index **IDV -** Individualism **MAS -** Masculinity
UAI - Uncertainty Avoidance Index **LTO -** Long-Term Orientation **100 - being high value 0 – no value**

COMMUNICATING WITH AFGHANS

Greeting:

- **Handshake or right hand over heart with slight nod**
- **Greeting in Pashtu or Dari is appreciated**
- **Men should not attempt to greet a woman unless the woman initiates the greeting**
- **It is preferable to greet the eldest or most senior first**



Small Talk:

- **Casual conversation is a must at the beginning of every encounter**
- **Consists of repeated inquiries about health, family, weather, crops**
- **Do not make specific inquiries about female family members**
- **Build rapport by sharing personal information (within the limits of your comfort and security)**
- **Accept offerings of food or tea (if you must decline, do so gracefully)**

Communicating With Afghans Cont.

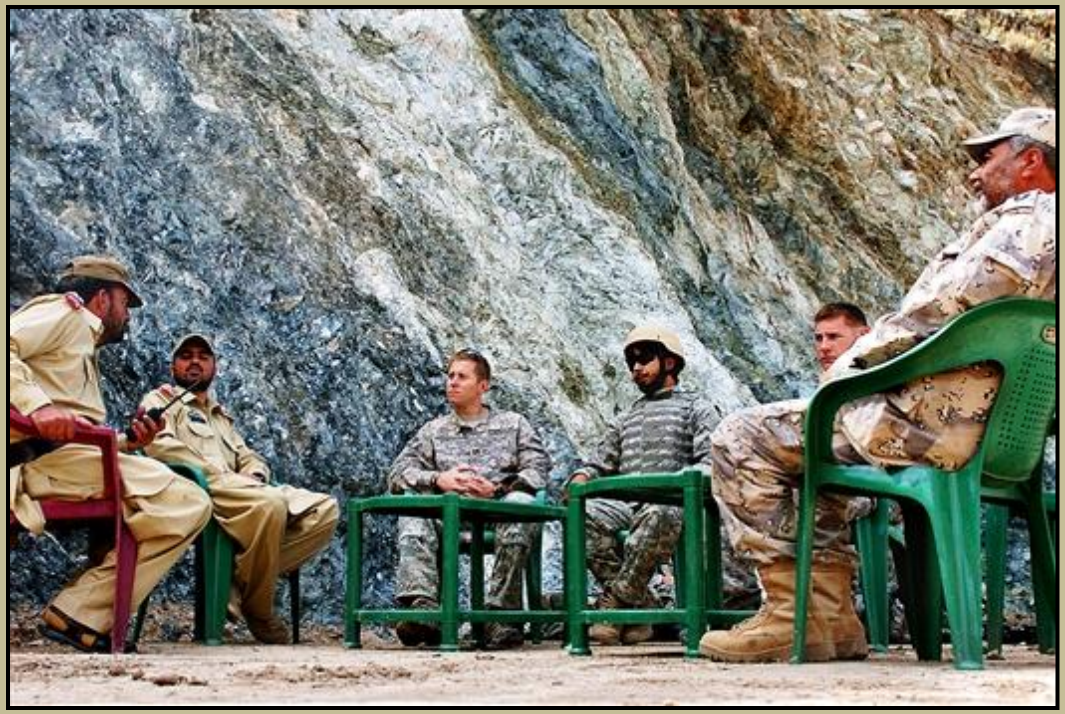
- Possible lines of communication that may contribute to greater efficiency and maximum impact:
 - Through government authorities in the cities
 - Through religious figures in villages
- Providing gifts, such as school supplies, for children can help build rapport
- Avoid communicating preference for one ethnic group over another
- Respect for the elderly can be the first step towards communication; do not be afraid of a hug or a kiss on the cheeks.

Meetings and Negotiations

To foster rapport and willingness to cooperate:

- Do not expect to address your goals during the initial meetings
- The first few meetings should focus on the goals and interests of the Afghans
- Never make a promise that you cannot keep
- Try to compliment the leader and avoid negatively affecting his honor
- Try not to openly disagree with their goals in public; instead, suggest further discussion may be needed
- Do not openly express anger or shout, as such behavior is viewed as disrespectful and shows a lack of self control
- Greet in Dari and/or Pashtu at the start and end of meetings
- In negotiations, allow your counterpart to ask about your agenda, only allow for small pieces to be revealed (enough for your counterpart to feel comfortable and build his trust in you)

Combined Meeting with US and Afghan Security Forces



Communicating With Afghans - Things to Avoid

- Pointing at some one
- Sticking out the tongue
- Yelling at someone in front of others
- Spitting
- Sitting with legs stretched in front of others, especially the elderly
- Talking with hands in pockets or behind one's back
- Making offensive hand gestures
- Talking to females directly or inquiring about an Afghan's wife or older female family members



How to use Hand Gestures for Training ANA as a tool of Communication

The biggest challenge to train the Afghan national Army is the language barrier. By knowing basic numbers and commands, and with hand gestures the Afghan soldiers quickly get the needed assistance.



Source of photo:

http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/news/marines-mentor-afghan-marksmen.html

Dining With Afghans

- To be invited is an honor, and attending a meal is a powerful way to build rapport. Reciprocation is appreciated by Afghans.
- Do not expect a quick dinner, nor a mixed gender dining arrangement
- Try to take a small gift (no alcohol); the gift will not be opened in front of you
- Allow the host to seat you
- Most likely floor seating – do not sit with legs stretched out in front of others particularly the elders.



- Food is often served and consumed from common plates; but not always (silverware may or may not be available)
- Try to avoid leaving excess food on your plate and be prepared for offers of 2nd and 3rd helpings



Afghan Family Life

- **In rural areas, life centers on the Qalaa or Qala'(pronounced "*kala")*, a walled compound/fort occupied by an extended family**
- **Extended family obligations, often supersede other responsibilities, including allegiance to spouse, job, and individual need**
- **Most marriages are arranged (between cousins) to reinforce alliances and/or ensure that property & wealth remain in family control**
- **Privacy & Protection from strangers or non-family members is a paramount concern --- however, privacy within the family is virtually unknown**

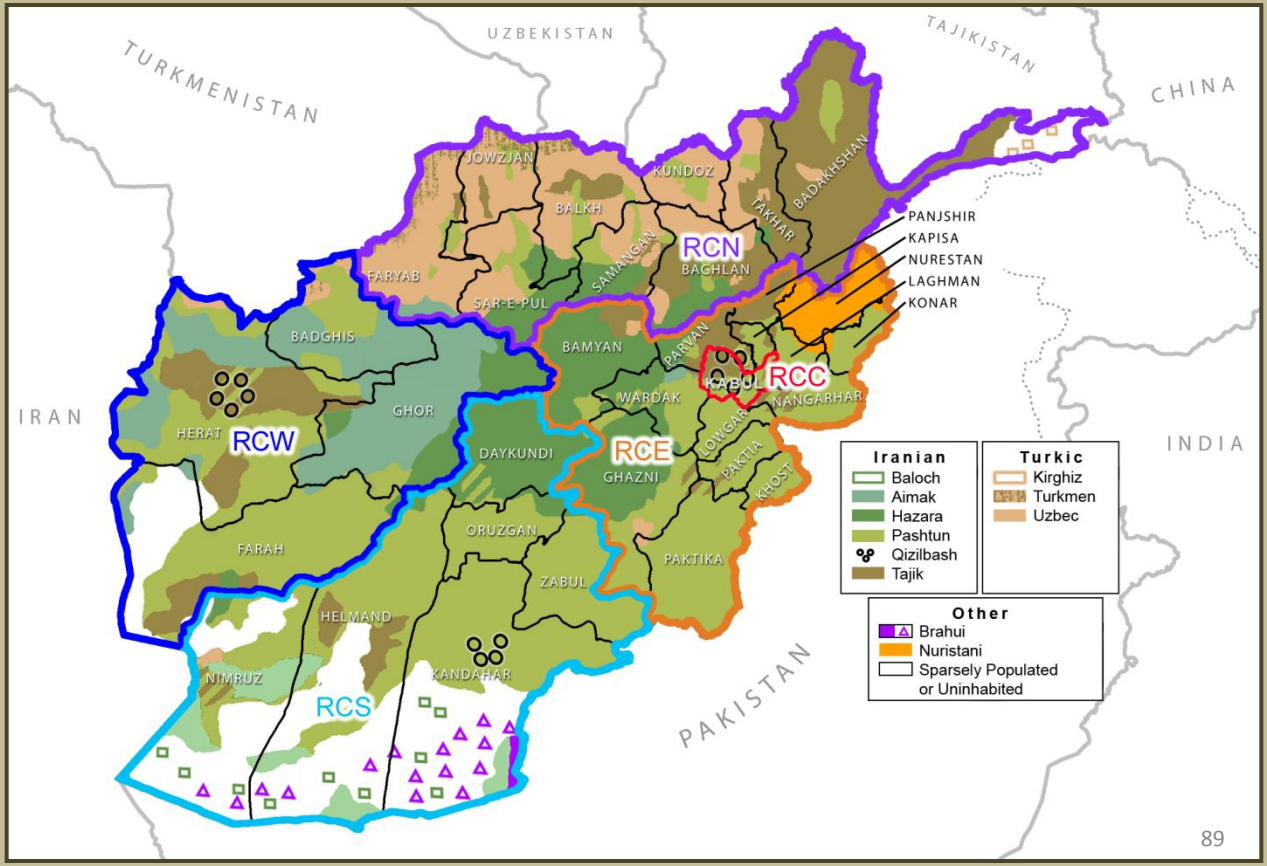
Buzkashi - The Afghan National Sport

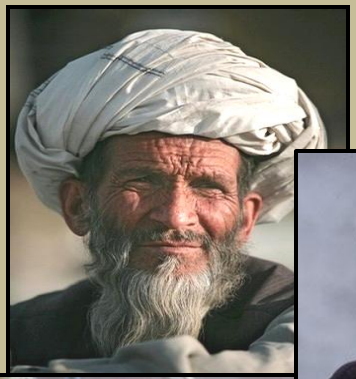
- ***Buzkashi*** **literally means "goat grabbing" in Dari. The origins of this game are believed to go back to the era of the Mongol conquest, when the Mongol riders would hunt, kill and pick up goats without dismounting from their horses. Purportedly, Afghan horseman learned to fight back and retook their animals from the Mongols who wanted to ride away with the livestock.**
- **Today *buzkashi* is an organized field game of ten to twelve players per team. The teams must transport the headless carcass of a calf or goat, weighing up to 60 kg, (130 lbs) the length of a football field and back, and then over a goal Line, without dropping it or allowing someone from the other team to wrestle it from them. In bigger cities, tournaments are played in stadiums. The rules forbid the use of knives or any direct physical attack of the person carrying the carcass.**
- **It is a rough sport that requires exceptional riding skills and well-trained horses.**
- ***Buzkashi*** **is typically played on special occasions, such as the Afghan New Year (Nawrose), Eid, Indepdence Day and weddings, though typically women are not allowed to watch.**



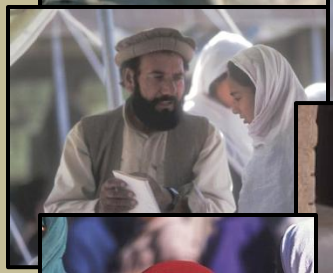
ETHNIC GROUPS

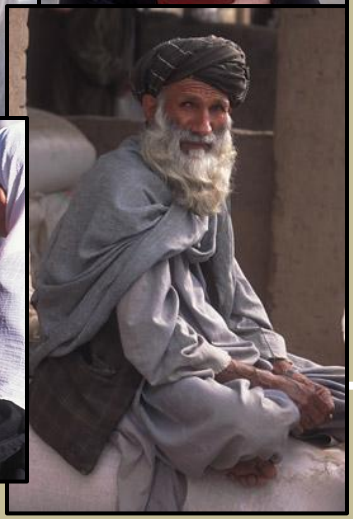
ETHNOLINGUISTIC COMPOSITION BY ISAF RC

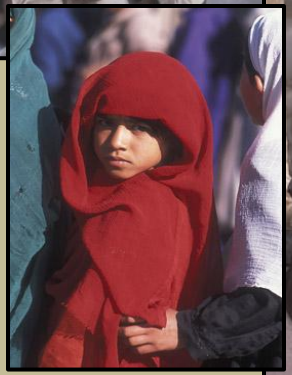












PASHTUNS

- **Largest single Afghan ethnicity**
- **Pashtu primary language**
- **President Hamid Karzai is Pashtun**
- **Independent, fierce**
- **View themselves as rightful leaders of Afghanistan**
- **Ghilzai Pashtun tribe forms backbone of Taliban**
- **The term “Afghan” is historically synonymous with Pashtun, yet it includes all Afghans.**

Pashtun proverb: "I against my brother; my brother and I against my cousin; I, my brother, and my cousin against the stranger"



Pashtunwali – The Way of the Pashtun

Pashtunwali is a term coined by anthropologists; while the term itself is unfamiliar to Pashtuns, it is an accurate description of an unwritten code or set of values important to their way of life

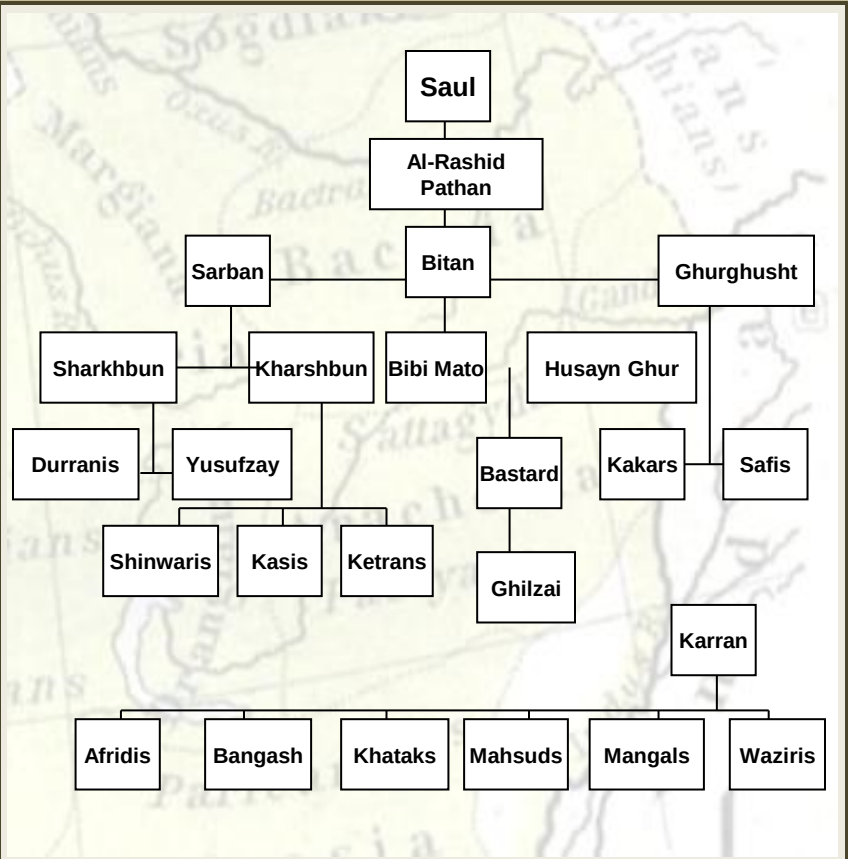
- ***Melmastia*** - Hospitality
- ***Badal*** - Justice/Revenge
- ***Nanawateh*** - Surrender
- ***Zemaka*** – Defense of land/earth
- ***Nang*** – Honor
- ***Namus*** - Honor of women
- ***Hewad*** – Nation
- **Panah** -- Asylum



Pashtuns and Islam

One thing that is common to most Pashtuns is their commitment to Islam as both a value system and a social structure. Many times their strong belief in Islam is blended with Pashtun tribal tradition. Still, they do rely on the pillars of Islam to live their lives and often the Mullah takes on the role of a community leader and arbitrator. The mosque is the center of the community. Pashtuns also rely heavily on the code of conduct known as Pashtunwali. It is an unwritten law passed down from one generation to the next. It covers many aspects of life to include: self authority, equality, assembly or counsels, elders, respect for all people, remedies for grievances, clan relationships, care for the needy, need for protection, hospitality, and many other day to day ways in which one and the tribe are to behave. At times it may supersede Islam.

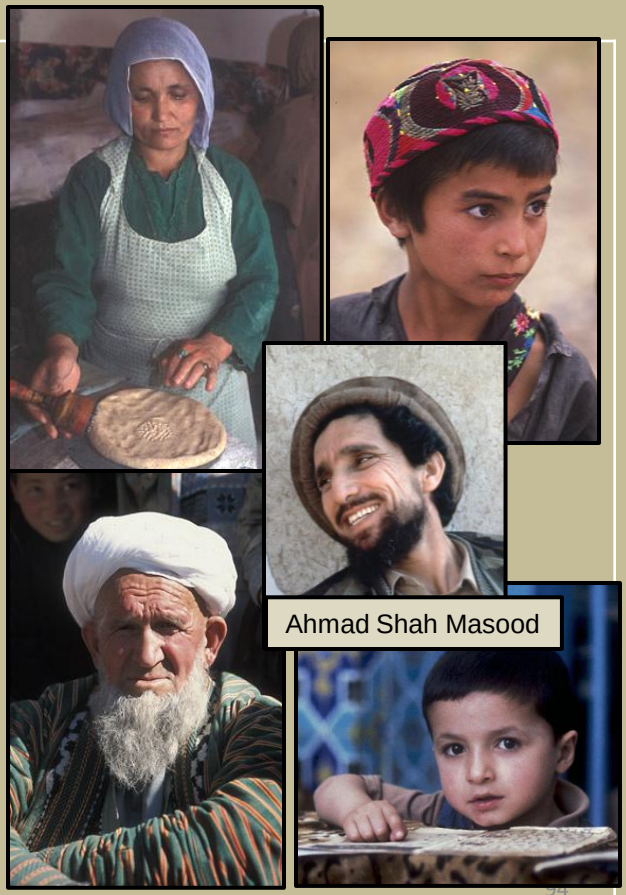
Pashtun Tribal Lineage



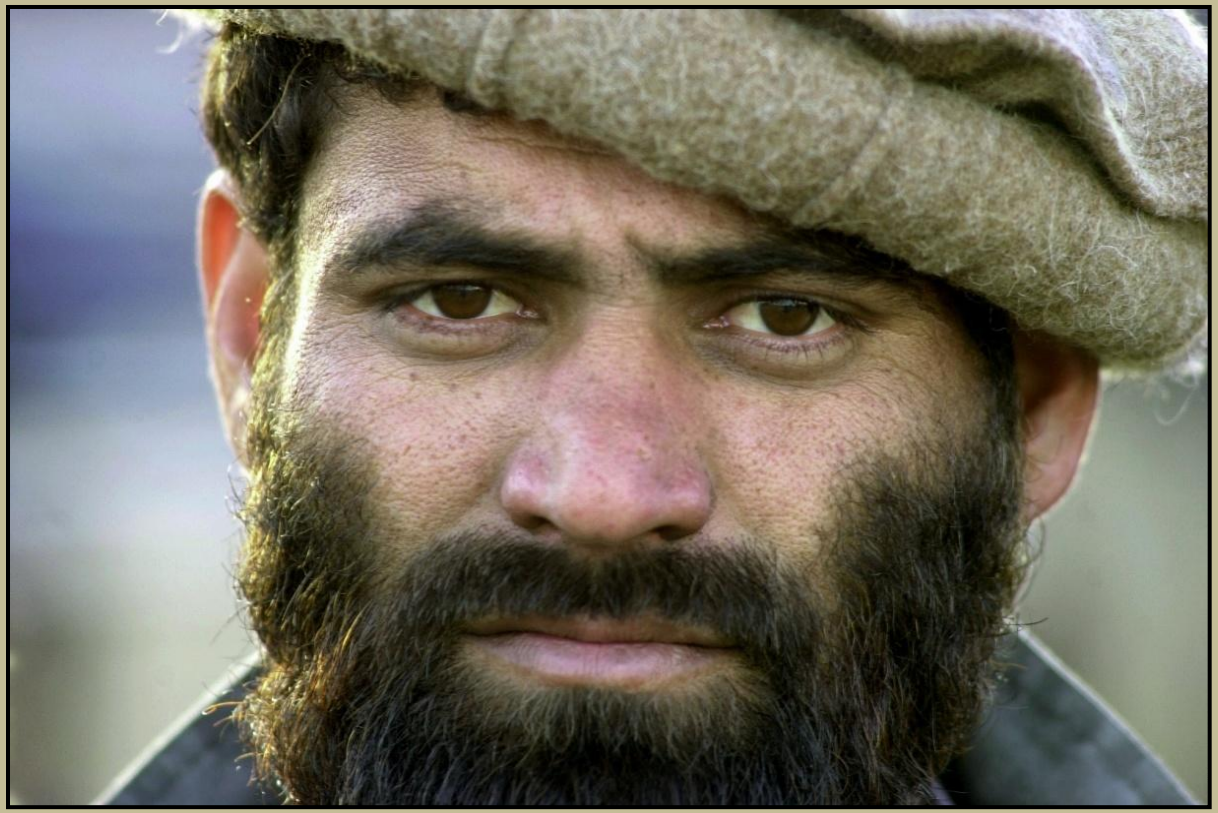
- **Pashtuns are divided into tribes and sub-divided into sub-tribes or clans.**
- **Tribes usually join a tribal confederation, a significant number are named after a legendary ancestor.**
- **The Durrani are the most powerful and influential tribal confederation in Afghanistan. The Taliban were primarily from this tribe.**
- **The Ghilzai is another very powerful and influential tribe in southern Afghanistan.**

TAJIK

- 2nd largest ethnic group (25 – 30% of population)
- One of the Vice Presidents is a Tajik.
- Refer to themselves as “Farsiwan” or speakers of Farsi/Dari
- Formed the backbone of Northern Alliance against Taliban
- Social organization by geography, not tribe
- Tied together by perceived threat of Pashtuns
- Ahmad Shah Masood (deceased), A Leader of the Northern Alliance, was Tajik
- Mostly Sunni Muslim, with few Shi’a



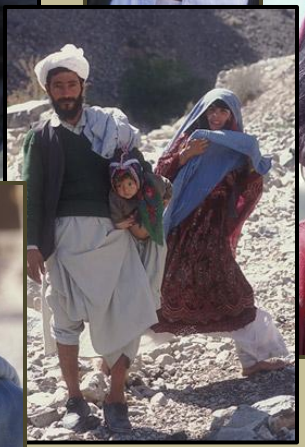
Tajik Militiaman



HAZARA











Hazara (Hazaara)

- Mongolian descent
- Tribal and agrarian
- Distinct ethnic and religious group
- Vast majority Shi'a Muslim
- Historical target of discrimination by Sunni Tribes; mostly by Pashtuns
- Still perform the most menial jobs
- Often anti-government, anti-Pashtun
- Persecuted by Taliban
- Occasional feuds with nomadic Kuchi



UZBEK (UOSBEK)

- Turkic-Mongol descent
- Located in Northern Afghanistan and Uzbekistan
- Uzbek and Dari speakers
- Most Sunni Muslim
- Introduced Buzkashi, Afghanistan's national sport







NURESTANI

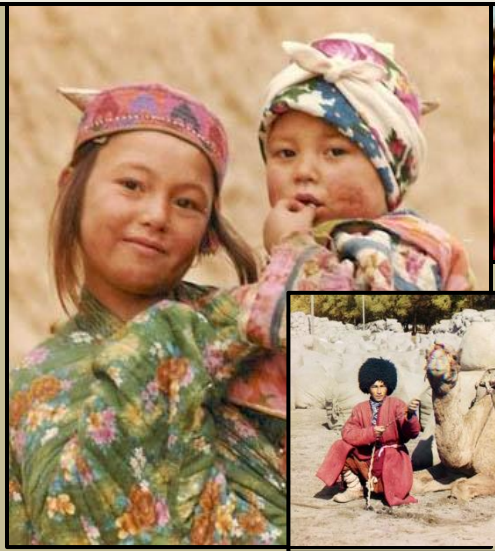
- Located in NE Afghanistan
- Claim lineage to Alexander the Great and/or Quraysh tribe of Arabia (who rejected Islam); both stories believed to have originated in myth
- Previously named "Kafirs" – infidels; they were forcibly converted to Islam by Amir Abdur Raham Khan in 1895
- Converted to Islam late 19th century
- 15 tribes with numerous sub-groups
- 5 languages with several dialects
- Tepid relations with other Afghans
- Animosity towards Arabs
- Protective of distinctive culture
- Many have features like light eyes, hair



TURKMEN

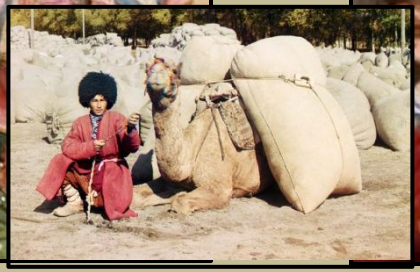
- Turkic-speaking group
- Turkic-Mongol origin
- Tribal structure based on patrilineal; meaning “father line”
- Farmer-herdsmen
- Jewelry and carpet makers
- Considerable contributions to the Afghan economy
- Live in areas neighboring Turkmenistan











Kuchi (Nomads)



- Nomadic herdsmen
- Primarily Pashtun and Baluch
- May seasonally relocate and/or cross-national borders
- High illiteracy rate
- Feud with settled populations over free grazing
- Number around 3 million
- Continue to fall victim to landmines emplaced during and after Soviet-Afghan War

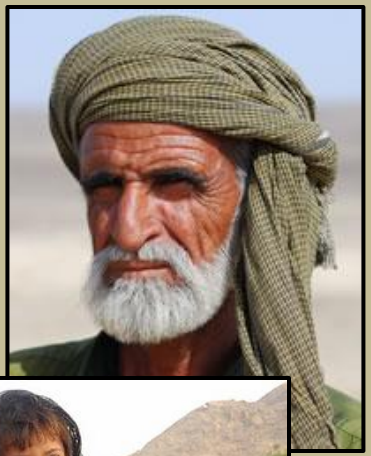


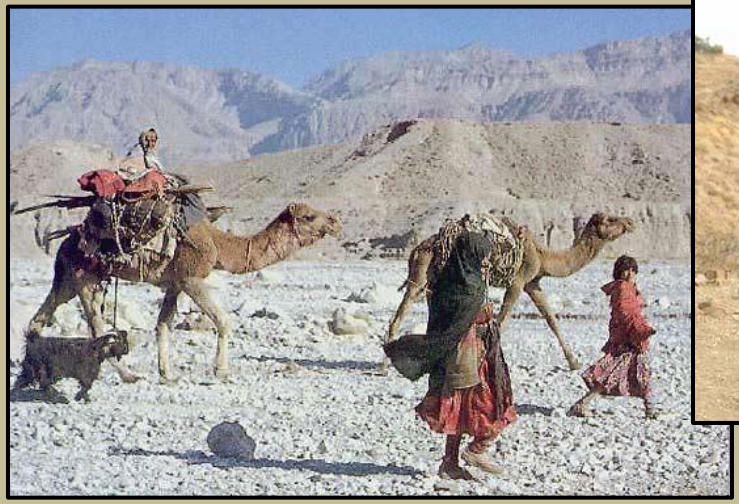


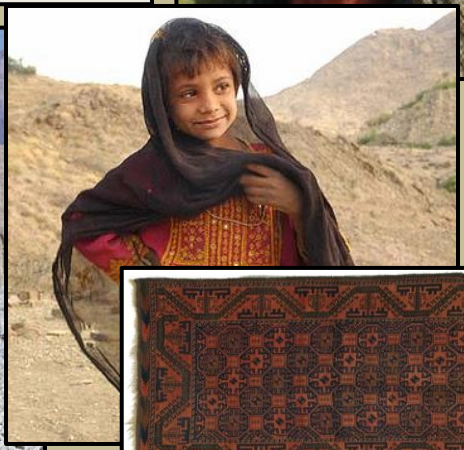
BALUCH

- Baluch: Iranian descent; speak Baluchi (Iranian language)
- Their traditional homeland is the Baluchistan Plateau
- Largely pastoral and desert dwellers; Sunni Muslim
- Baluchi Nationalism, which continues to this day, has resulted in several uprisings.
- Have a distinct cultural identity maintained by their isolated and nomadic life style
- Known for their beautiful natural colored camel hair rugs

Photo Source: Ahsan Ali







Other Groups

Pashai

- Very little known about them
- characterized by language – Pashai (Dardic language)
- Many consider themselves Pashtun
- often associated with or referred to as Kohistani
- Inhabit Nuristan, parts of Laghman, and N. Nangarhar
- Many in timber and livestock businesses

Qizilbash

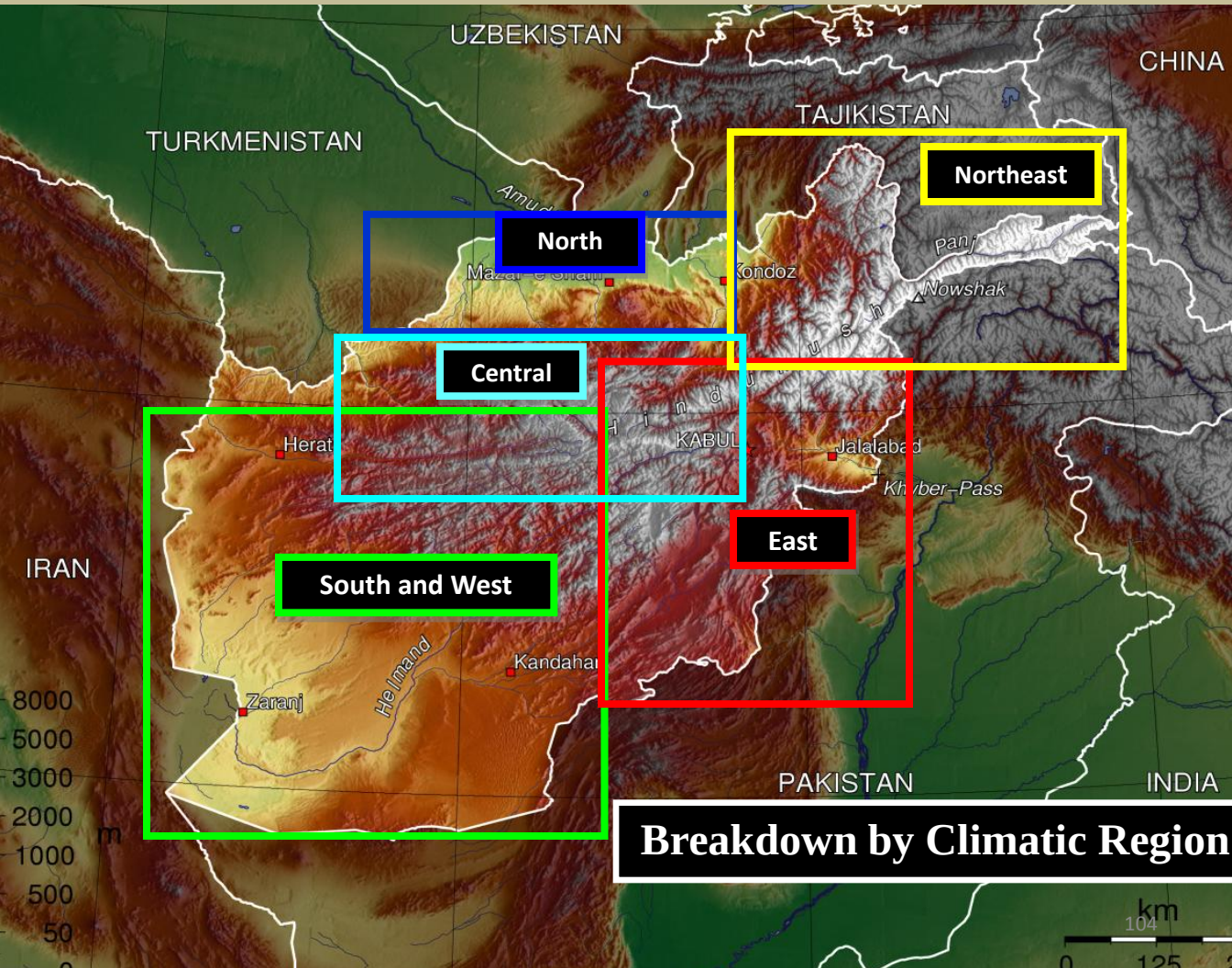
- Imami Shi'a group
- Thought to be descendants of Persian mercenaries and administrators of Safavid empire; were influential in Afghan court and government due to higher levels of education and experience
- Appear to inhabit urban centers as professionals (doctors, teachers, engineers, lawyers)

Kabuli (Kabul)

- Elites
- Heterogeneous urban population of Kabul City
- Ethnic-neutral (i.e. mixed)
- Generations of intermarriages
- Speak Dari in addition to mother tongue
- Often secularly educated
- Familiar with/adopt Western-oriented outlook
- Many left capital during past three decades of war

Other Ethnic Groups

- Gujjar: Nomadic; language not Indo-European; millennia old traditions; possibly related to Nuristanis
- Hindus: known for moneylending; persecuted under Taliban; many returning to Afghanistan
- Sikhs: known for craftsmanship; must carry knife; persecuted by Taliban; many returning
- Aimak: Perisan-speaking, nomadic/semi-nomadic, Mongolian/Iranian mix


UZBEKISTAN
CHINA
TURKMENISTAN
TAJIKISTAN
Northeast
North
Panj
Kondoz
Nowshak
Central
Herat
KABUL
Jalalabad
East
IRAN
South and West
Kandahar
Zaranj
PAKISTAN
INDIA
8000
5000
3000
2000
1000
500
50
m
km
104
Breakdown by Climatic Region

Provinces by Region

Southern and Western Regions:

Herat, Farah, Nimruz, Helmand, Kandahar

Eastern Region:

Konar, Nangarhar, Lowgar, Paktia, Khost, Paktika, Ghazni, Zabul, Laghman

Northern Region:

Faryab, Jowzjan, Sar-e-Pul, Balkh, Samangan, Baghlan, Kunduz, Badghis

Northeastern Region:

Takhar, Panjshir, Nurestan, Badakhshan

Central Region:

Ghor, Daykundi, Oruzgan, Wardak, Kabul, Kapisa, Parvan, Bamyan

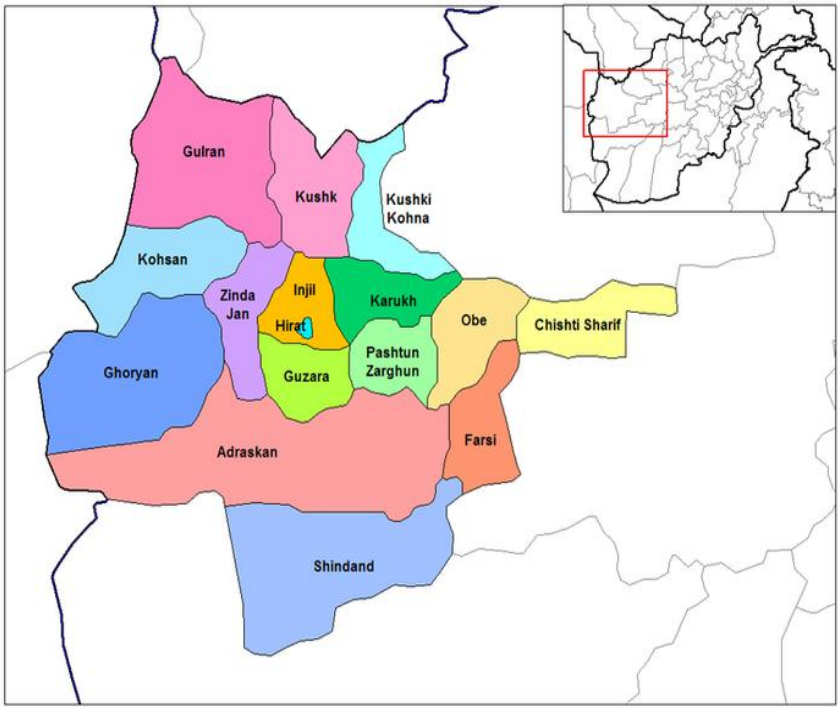
Southern and Western Regions
Herat, Farah, Nimruz, Helmand, Kandahar



Southern and Western Regions

The Southern and Western climate generally covers the Herat, Farah, and Nimruz provinces in the West and the Helmand and Kandahar provinces in the South. This region has incredibly hot summers. Snow rarely falls in the southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar during the winter, whereas the Western provinces will see some snow with little to no accumulation. Nimruz and Farah provinces have large, sandy deserts known locally as Registan or "Sandy Land." The entire Southern region experiences high winds and sand storms from May – September. The region has a Pashtun majority, followed by a concentration of Baluch in the southernmost areas. There are pockets of Tajik populations in the region, and a small amount of Hazaras and Aimaks or Aimãqs. The security situation has been unstable, and insurgent groups have controlled districts in the region. Helmand province is of great significance as it is responsible for over 50% of the world's opium production.

Western Afghanistan - Herat



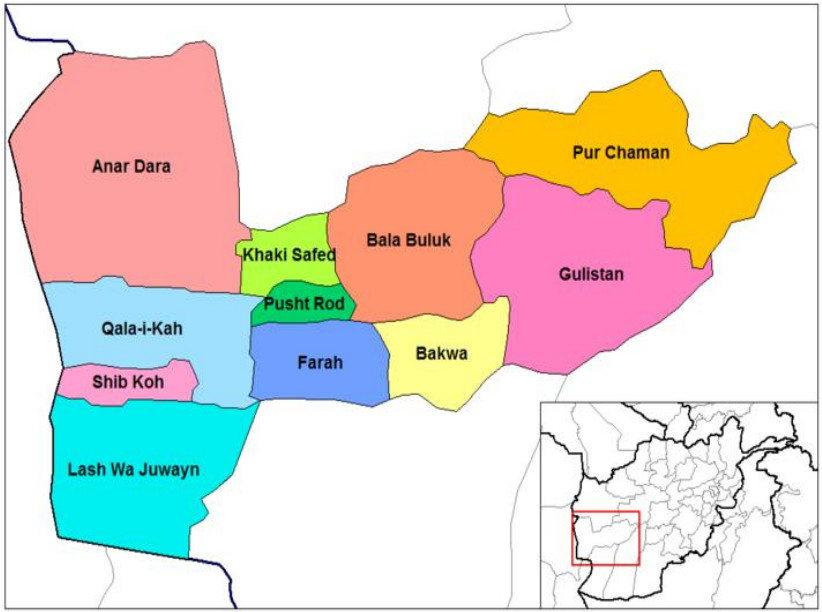
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun
Tajik
Hazara

Languages:
Pashtu
Dari

Herat Province - Capital: Herat

Geography and Climate:	**Bounded by the Khorasan desert in the west, mountains in the east and north fertile tract that contains the districts of Herat, Ghoryan, Obe, and Karukh**
Economy:	**One of the country's richest agricultural communities; agriculture, livestock, and carpet weaving**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Most of the opium production takes place in Shindand District where insurgent groups are very active**
Dangers/Concerns:	**High level of criminal activity throughout the province– particularly rural areas**
Significance:	**Once a center of Persian poetry and philosophy,**

Western Afghanistan – Farah



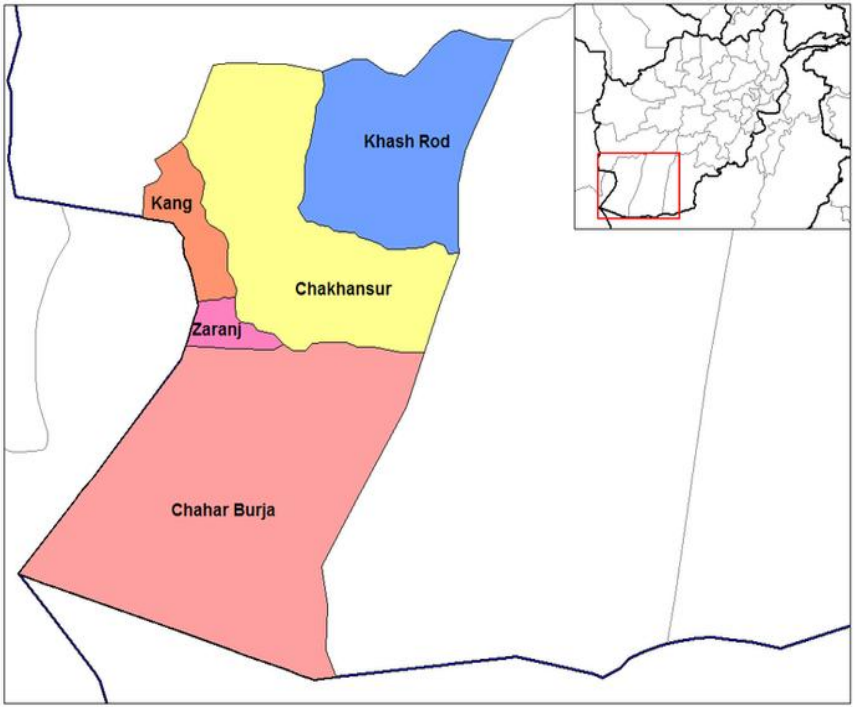
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun - 80%
Tajik - 14%
Other - 6%

Languages:
Dari - 50%
Pashtu - 48%

Farah Province - Capital: Farah

Geography and Climate:	**Desert plains south of Farah Road; mountainous north and east of Farah City**
Economy:	**6th largest opium producing province; 9% of arable land under opium poppy cultivation**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Opium poppy is mainly cultivated in the Bala Buldak and Bakwa districts**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Taliban pressure combined with government sponsored poppy eradication programs have pushed residents into arms of insurgency**
Significance:	**Tomb of Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri (who claimed to be the Mahdi) visited every year by many; home to many ruined castles, including "Castle of Infidel"**

Southern Afghanistan – Nimruz (Neemrose)



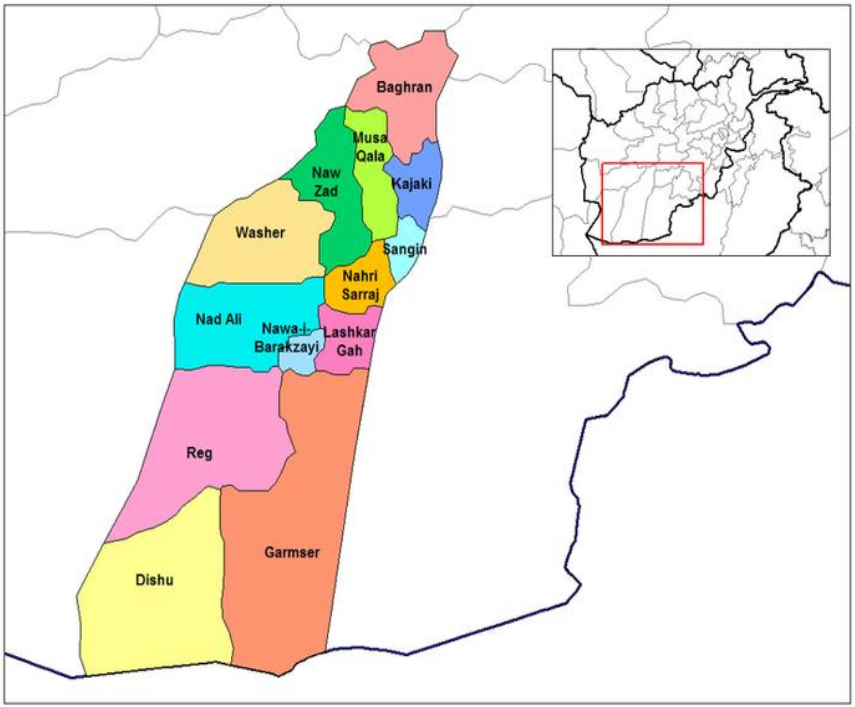
Ethnic Groups:
Baluch - 61%
Pashtun - 27%
Tajik
Uzbek

Languages:
Baluchi - 61%
Pashtu - 27%
Dari - 10%
Uzbek - 10%

Nimruz Province - Capital: Zaranj

Geography and Climate:	**Desert; arid; nearly all of the province (95.3%) is made up of flat land**
Economy:	**According to USAID, less than a quarter of Nimruz's trade with Iran is legal and more than 70 % of the local population participates in smuggling activities**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Important transit point to Pakistan and Iran; fertile Khash Rod District prime opium growing area**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Narco-trafficker violence to support economic interests; corruption with Afghan Border Security personnel**
Significance:	**The ancient city of Zaranj was the capital of the Saffarid Empire**

Southern Afghanistan – Helmand



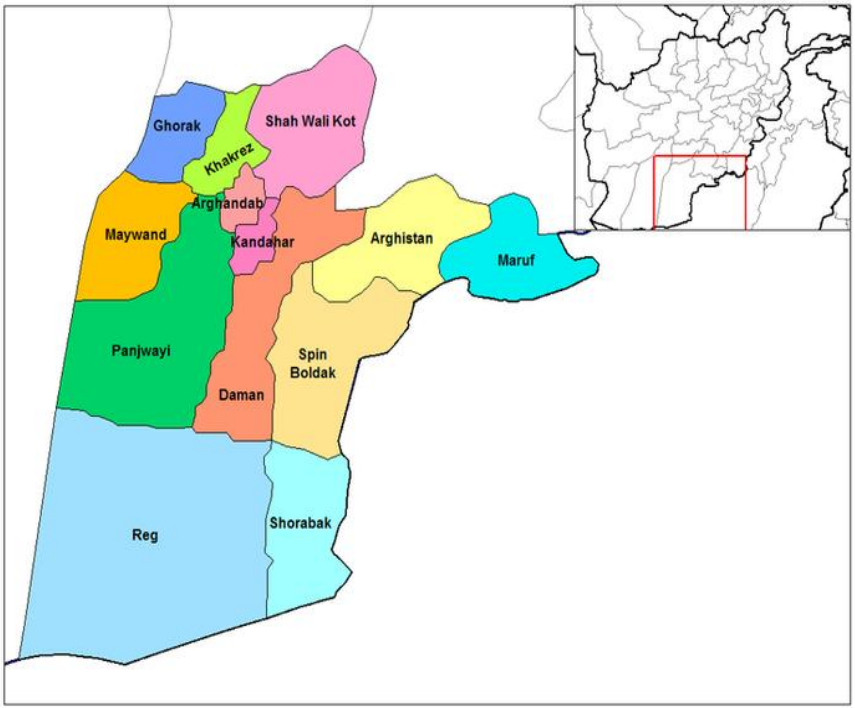
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun - 92%
Baluch

Languages:
Pashtu - 92%
Baluchi
Dari

Helmand Province - Capital: Lashkar Gah

Geography and Climate:	**Deserts in the south, hills in the north, and the fertile Helmand River Valley along the length of the province**
Economy:	**Opium cultivation and production; almost every family is involved in the drug trade; 94% of population lives in rural districts**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Produces 50% of world's opium**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Security is extremely poor; serious infiltration of anti-government forces**
Significance:	**One of the early centers of Zoroastrianism; was also known as "White India" due to its populations of Brahmans and Buddhists**

Southern Afghanistan – Kandahar



Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun

Languages:
Pashtu - 98%

Kandahar Province - Capital: Kandahar City

Geography and Climate:	**More than four-fifths flat land; arid**
Economy:	**Agriculture; recently growing dependence on poppy cultivation, during the last century Kandahar produced most of the fresh and dried fruit for internal and export of Afghanistan.**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Statistically the second largest poppy producing province in the country**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Security situation remains volatile; insurgent presence active or at least present in all districts**
Significance:	**Home province of President Hamid Karzai, and the birthplace of the Taliban**

Northern Region

Faryab, Jowzjan, Sar-e-Pul, Balkh, Samangan, Baghlan, Kunduz, Badghis (Badghees)



Northern Region

The northern climate area pertains to the provinces of Badghis(Badghees), Faryab, Jowzjan, Sar-e-Pul, Balkh, Samangan, Baghlan, and Kunduz. Winters here can be very cold with accumulating snowfall especially in the areas around the city of Mazar-e-Sharif in Balkh province. Also on this plain, the summers can reach temperatures of 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Uzbeks are the ethnic majority in this region, followed by Tajiks and Hazaras; there are also pockets of Pashtuns and Turkmen. In recent years threat activity has been low, but some poppy cultivation and trafficking is ongoing (esp. in Sar-e-Pul). Mazar-e-Sharif is famous for its Blue Mosque, which receives hundreds of thousands of pilgrims each year at Nawrose (Afghan New Year).

Northwest Afghanistan – Badghis (Badghees)



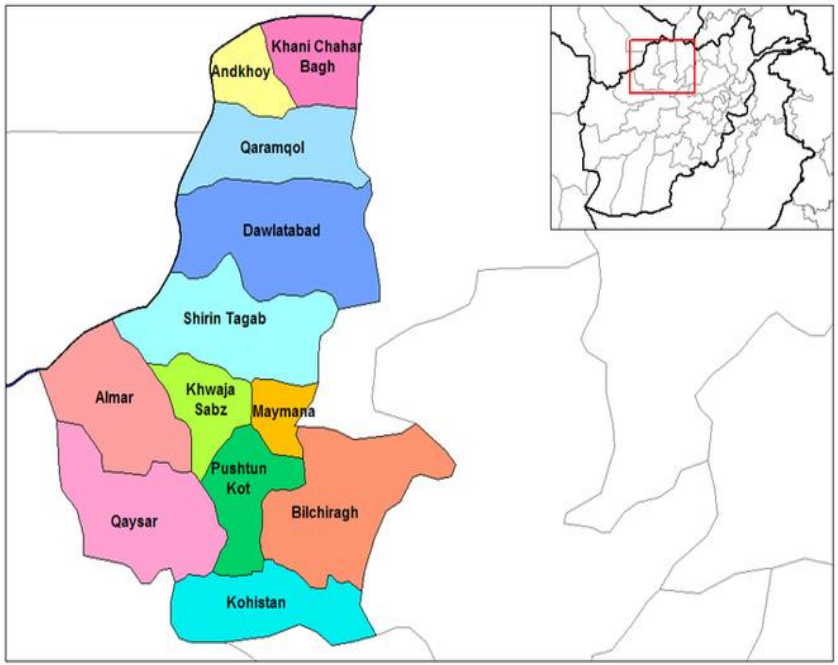
Ethnic Groups:
Tajik - 62%
Pashtun - 28%
Uzbek - 5%
Turkmen - 3%

Languages:
Dari - 56%
Pashtu - 40%

Badghis (Badghees) Province - Capital: Qala-I-Naw

Geography and Climate:	**Murghab River in the north and the Hari-(Road) River in the south; bordered on the north by the Desert of the Sarakhs; extremely mountainous and remote**
Economy:	**Agriculture and animal husbandry**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Opium poppy cultivated mainly in the Ghormach, Murghab and Qadis districts; opium is not a major source of income for the province**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Security situation has deteriorated in the northern districts of Ghormach and Murghab; Pashtun population in the area generally sympathetic to the local Taliban**
Significance:	**Badghis = "Lap of Wind"; Pashtun tribes relocated to Badghees in late 19th century**

Northwestern Afghanistan – Faryab (Faryaab)



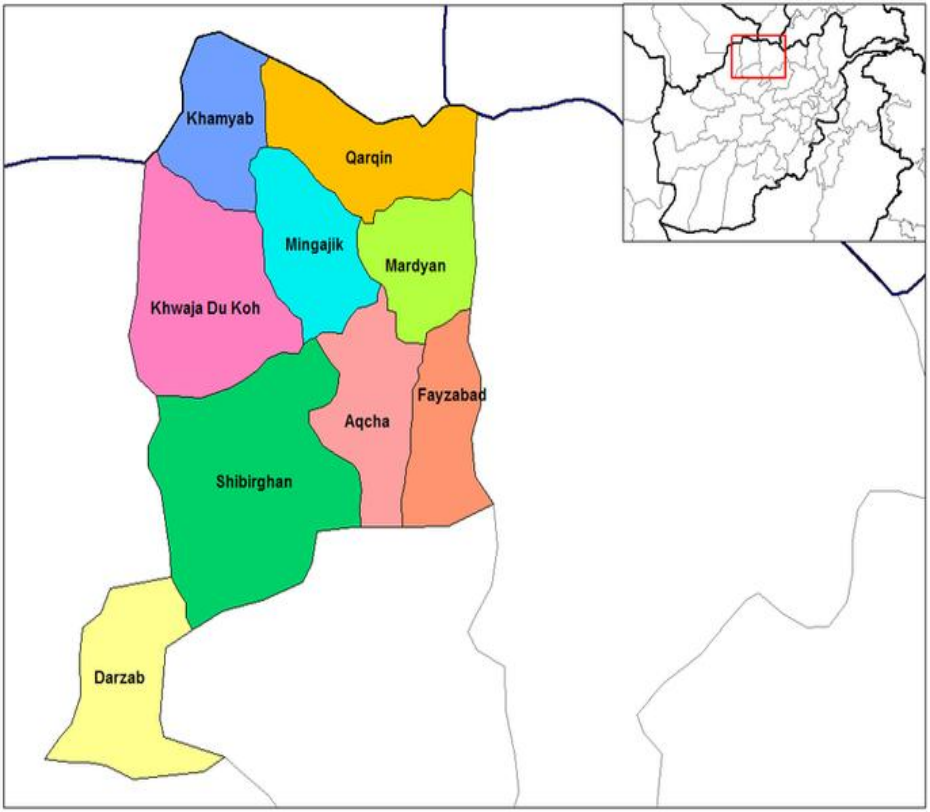
Ethnic Groups:
Uzbek - 54%
Tajik - 27%
Pashtun - 13%
Turkmen

Language:
Uzbeki
Dari
Pashtun

Faryab (Faryaab) Province - Capital: Maymana

Geography and Climate:	**Two thirds mountainous or semi - mountainous**
Economy:	**Agriculture; industrial commodities; handicrafts - rugs and carpets**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Little poppy cultivation but one of the most important transit areas for drug trafficking, especially Bilchiragh, Gorziwan and Kohistan**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Improvised explosive device attacks against International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) in Maimana City; violent demonstrations with some involvement of the locals**
Significance:	**Named after a town founded by Sassanids and later destroyed by invading Mongols in 1220**

Northwestern Afghanistan – Jowzjan (Jowzjaan)



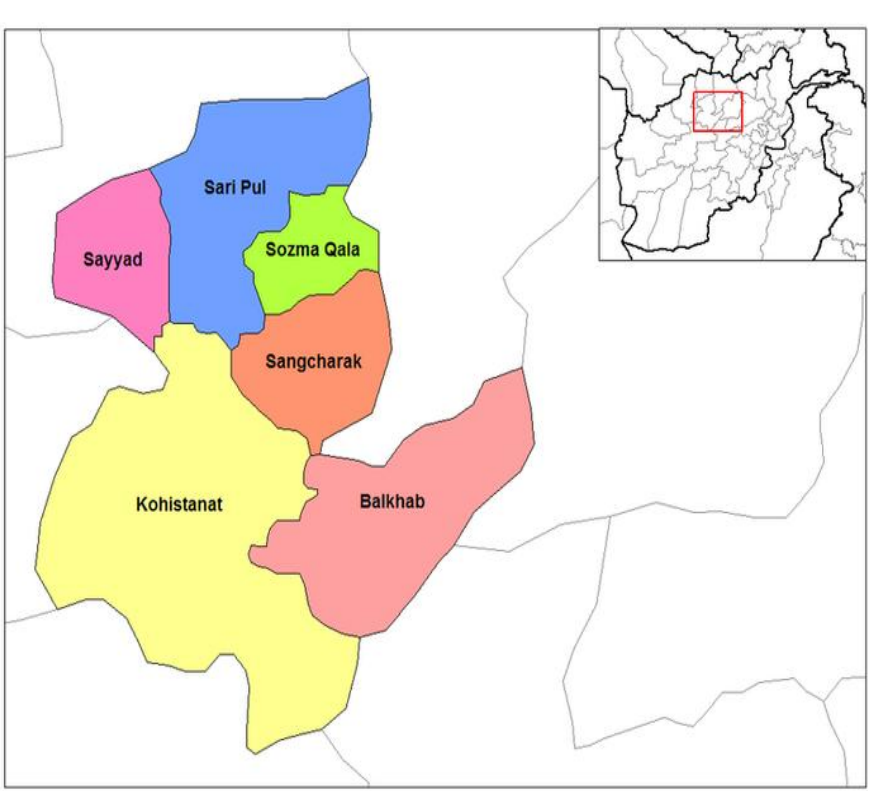
Ethnic Groups:
Uzbek - 40%
Turkmen - 29%
Tajik - 12%
Pashtun - 17%

Languages:
Dari
Uzbek
Turkmen

Jowzjan (Jowzjaan) Province - Capital: Sheberghan

Geography and Climate:	**More than one quarter mountainous; two thirds of the area flat**
Economy:	**Agriculture**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Most local commanders involved in the narcotics business**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Some unrest; factional clashes continue to cause instability; there are indications that Darzab district may serve as a base for Anti Government Elements (AGE)**
Significance:	**Traditional powerbase of Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostum**

Northwestern Afghanistan – Sar-e Pol



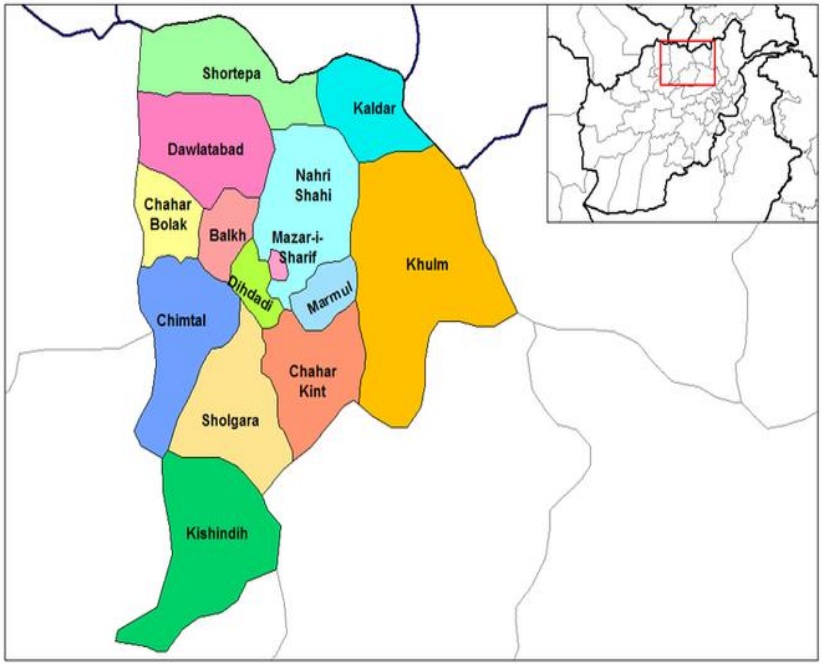
Ethnic Groups:
Uzbek
Hazara
Pashtun
Tajik

Languages:
Dari - 56%
Uzbek - 19%

Sar-e-Pul Province - Capital: Sar-e Pol

Geography and Climate:	**75% mountainous terrain,14% flat**
Economy:	**Agriculture; area largely undeveloped**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Poppy cultivation is ongoing; transit area for drug trafficking**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Relatively calm and stable; some unresolved land disputes**
Significance:	**Named after Buddhist disciple Sariputta, who originated from the area**

Northwestern Afghanistan – Balkh



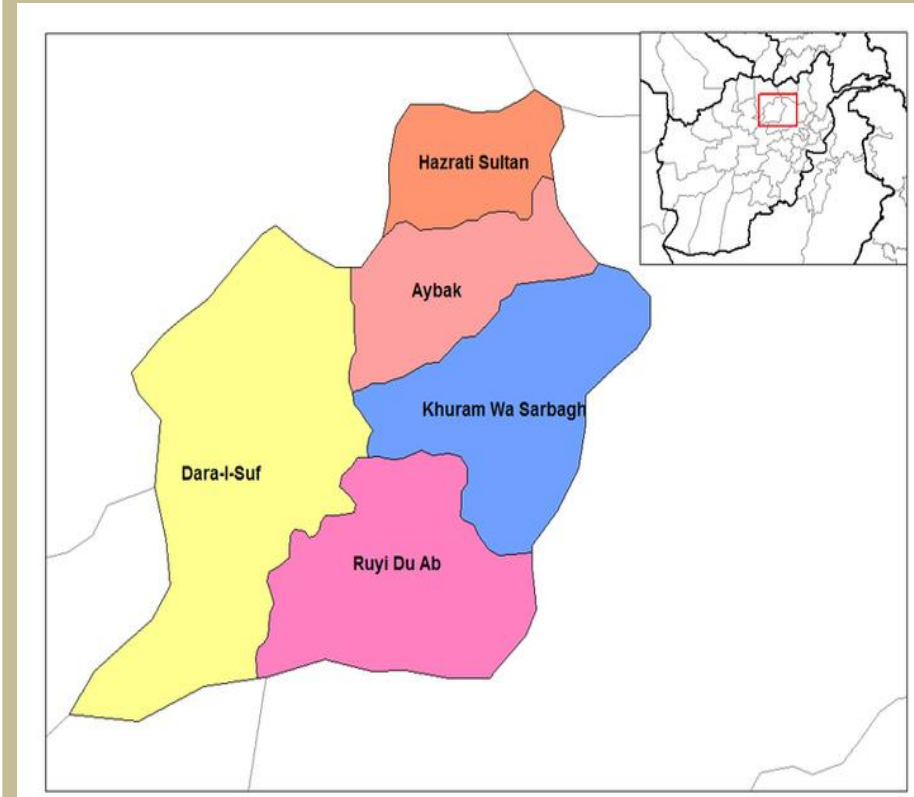
Ethnic Groups:
Tajik
Pashtun
Turkmen
Uzbek

Languages:
Dari - 50%
Pashtu - 27%
Turkmen - 12%
Uzbek - 11%

Balkh Province - Capital: Mazar-e-Sharif (Shareef)

Geography and Climate:	**50% mountainous, 50% flat**
Economy:	**Mazar-e-Sharif is a commercial and financial center; poppy production still a significant source of income. Has a large fertilizer company that is exporting the northern neighbors.**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Poppy and hashish cultivation in Balkh still significant; reportedly 40% of poppy cultivated land destroyed by government; remaining 60% is under control of local commanders and individuals**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Criminality mostly tied to opium and hashish trafficking**
Significance:	**Located along the historic Silk Route, was the ancient center of Zoroastrianism and the Bactrian Empire**

Northwestern Afghanistan – Samangan (Samangaan)



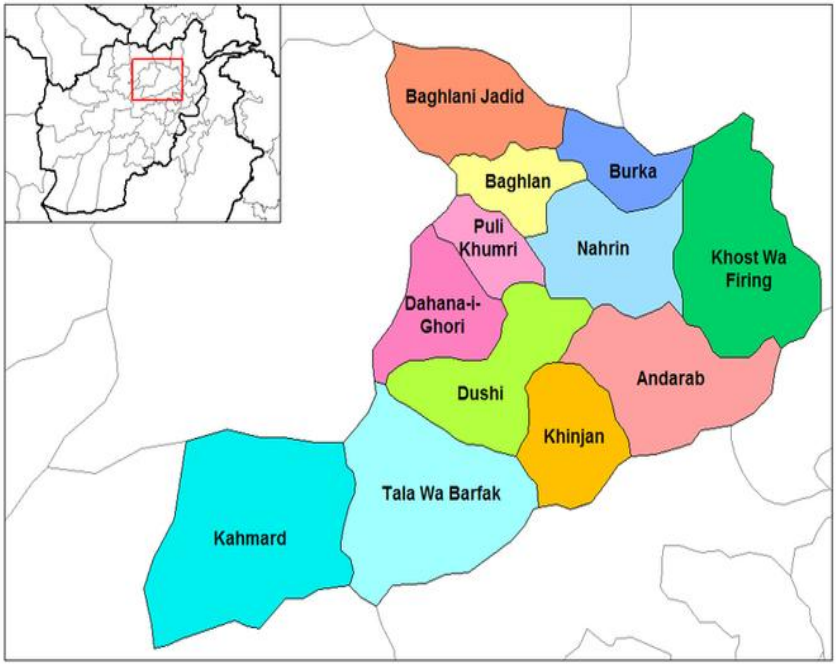
Ethnic Groups:
Majority Uzbek and Tajik
Pashtun
Hazara

Languages:
Dari - 75%
Uzbeki - 22%

Samangan Province - Capital: Aybak

Geography and Climate:	**Four fifths mountainous; 12% of the area flat.**
Economy:	**Agriculture**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Poppy eradication successful; few remote areas do continue poppy growing Rui Do Ab and Dara-i-Suf districts still the two major drug transit areas**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Relatively calm and stable**
Significance:	**Was once the ancient Buddhist center where learning was encouraged**

Northern Afghanistan – Baghlan (Baghlaan)



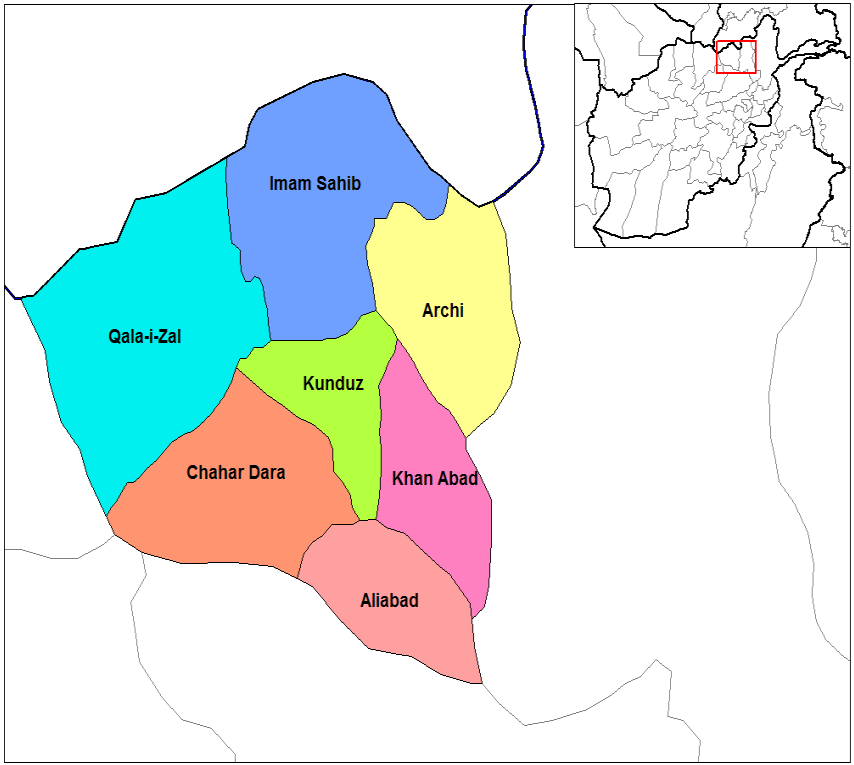
Ethnic Groups:
Tajik - 50%
Pashtun - 20%
Hazara - 15%
Uzbek - 12%
Tatar - 3%

Languages:
Dari
Uzbeki

Baghlan (Baghlaan) Province - Capital: Puli Khumri

Geography and Climate:	**Over half mountainous** **Lies on main route to Northern provinces.**
Economy:	**Agriculture**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Significant amounts of cultivation and trafficking**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Opium cultivation remains major concern**
Significance:	**In 1st century CE was the site of a famous Zoroastrian fire temple; currently has the only functioning cement factory in Afghanistan**

Northern Afghanistan – Kunduz



Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun
Tajik
Uzbek
Hazara
Turkmen

Languages:
Pashtu
Dari

Kunduz Province - Capital: Kunduz

Geography and Climate:	**¾ flat; 12% mountainous; fertile land; route to access Tajikistan**
Economy:	**Agriculture, cotton, textile factory, vegetable oil production**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Very little production; part of Kabul-Pulikhumri-Kunduz-Tajikistan drug route**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Illegally armed groups and warlords; community support for anti-government elements; Chahar Dar considered a high threat district**
Significance:	**On 4 September 2009 German ISAF elements called an air strike against two NATO fuel trucks that had been captured by insurgents; as a result of the US aircraft attack, more than 90 people were killed, among them at least 40 civilians, who had gathered to collect fuel.**

Northeastern Region

Takhar, Panjshir, Nurestan, Badakhshan

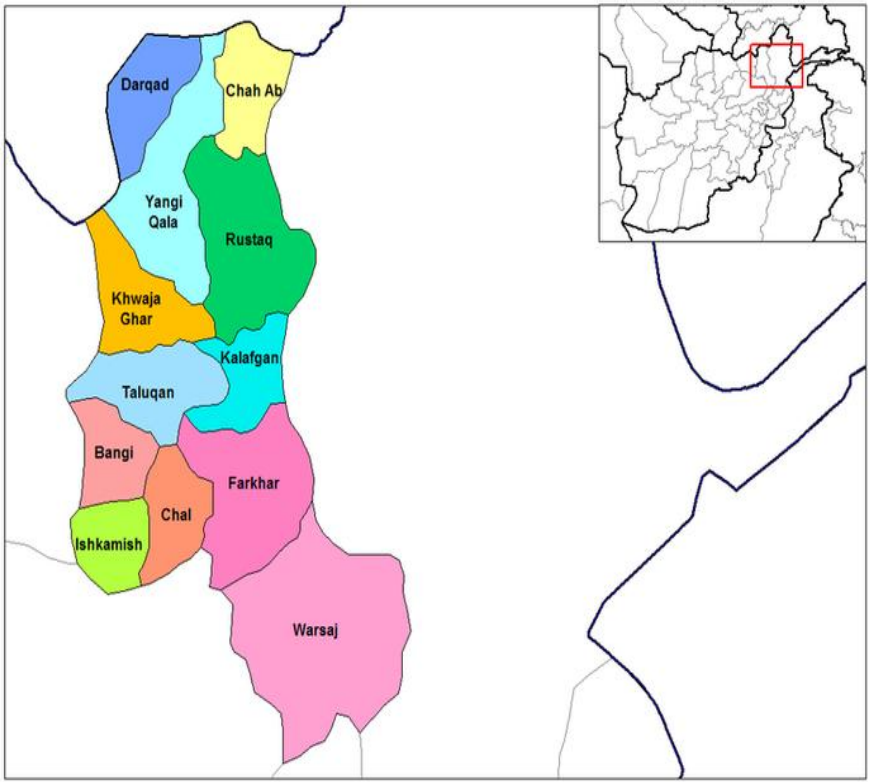
Takhaar, Pajshaer, Nurestaan, Badakhshaan



Northeastern Region:

The northeastern border climate is made up of the highest elevations in the Hindu Kush mountain range which leads up to the Himalayan Mountains. During the winter months, these mountains are impassable and during the summer, heavy poppy trafficking is pervasive. The provinces covered in this region are Takhar, Panjshir, Nurestan, and Badakhshan. With the exception of Nurestan, which is almost 100% Nurestani, the region has an ethnic majority of Tajiks; Uzbeks are the next largest group, and there are a few Hazara and Pashtun populations. Although the Panjshir and Badakhshan provinces never came under Taliban control, there is some Taliban activity in the region. Nurestan is an area of concern as Taliban have been able to operate openly in the region.

Northeast Afghanistan – Takhar (Takhaar)



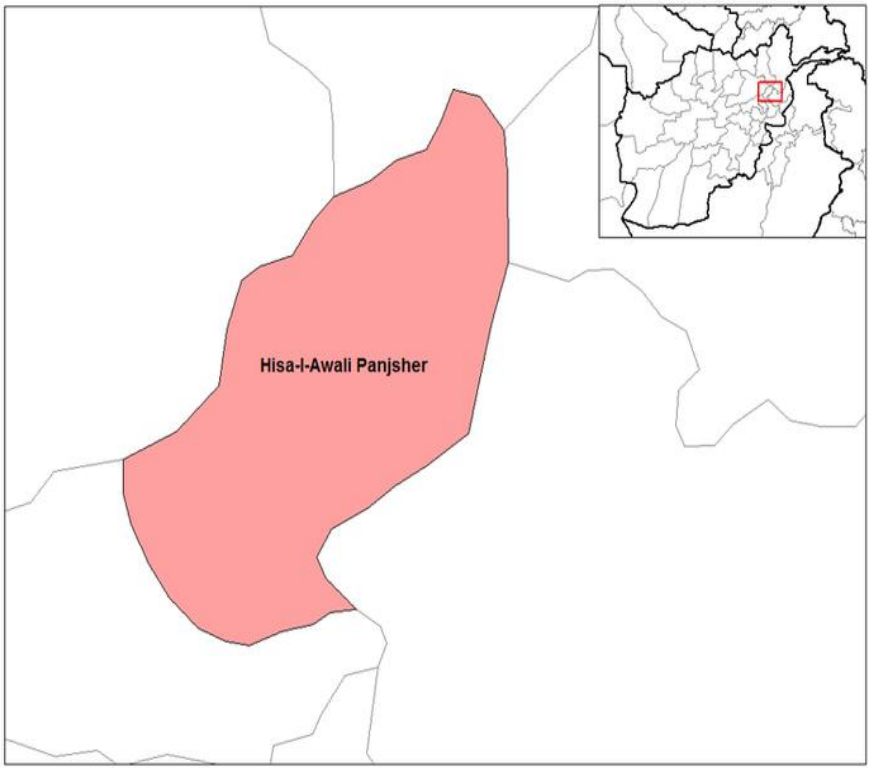
Ethnic Groups:
Majority:
Uzbeks and Tajiks
Minorities:
Pashtuns and Hazara

Languages:
Dari
Uzbek
Pashtun

Takhar(Takhaar) Province - Capital: Taloqan (Taloqaan)

Geography and Climate:	**Border with Tajikistan; more than half mountainous; one third flat terrain**
Economy:	**Salt mines one of country's major mineral resources; agriculture, trade and services**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Used by drug traffickers as a secure passage to Tajikistan**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Internal disputes between local commanders, tribal leaders, and drug traffickers**
Significance:	**Location where Ahmad Shah Masood, the Tajik Northern Alliance commander, was assassinated**

Northeastern Afghanistan – Panjshir (Panjshaer)



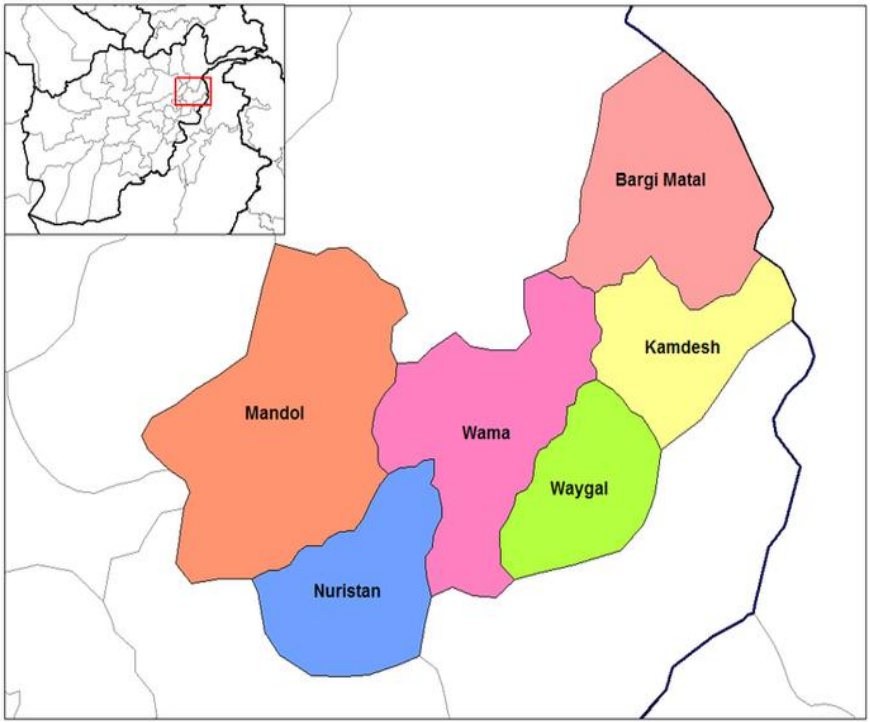
Ethnic Groups:
Mostly Tajik
Some Hazara
(Small number of Pashtun, Nurestani, Pashai)

Languages:
Dari
(Small pockets of Pashtu speakers)

Panjshir (Panjshaer) Province - Capital: Bazarak (Baazaarak) (formerly part of Kapisa Province)

Geography and Climate:	**Panjshir valley; mountainous, high peaks; streams, greenery**
Economy:	**Non farm-related labor, agriculture, trade and services. A Afghanistan local sweet, Talkhaan which is a mixture of blackberries and walnuts**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Virtually poppy-free**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Relatively secure; some unexploded ordinances**
Significance:	**Panjshir = Five Lions; Tomb of Shaheed (martyr) Ahmad Shah Masood, commander of Northern Alliance; anti-Taliban area**

Northwestern Afghanistan – Nurestan (Nurestaan)



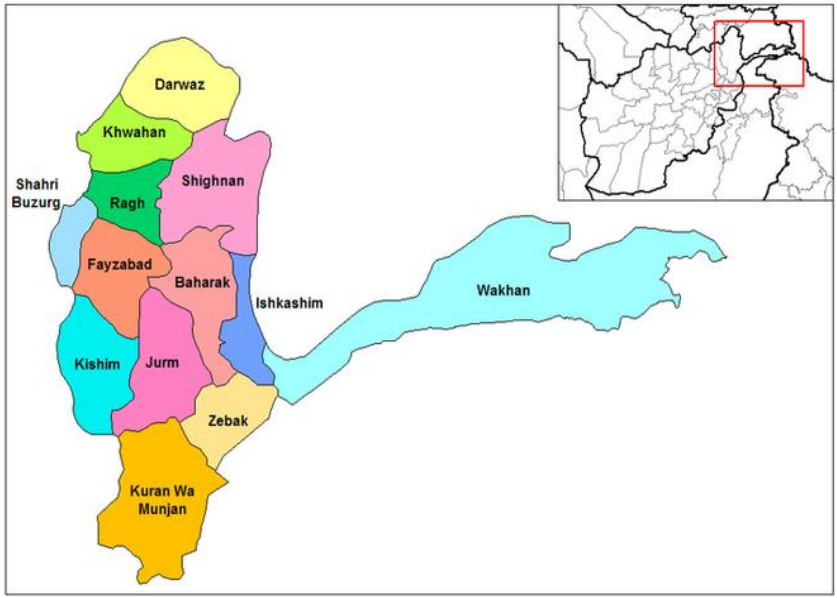
Ethnic Groups:
Nurestani - 99%

Languages:
Nurestani - 78%
Peshayee - 15%

Nurestan Province - Capital: Parun

Geography and Climate:	**99% mountainous; most impassable regions**
Economy:	**Agriculture, livestock, day labor; trade across border with Pakistan; one of poorest regions**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Land unsuitable for poppy cultivation; some drug trafficking across border**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Poor security/some parts under Taliban control lack of infrastructure; local militias stronger than government**
Significance:	**Until the 1890s, the region was known as Kafiristan (Persian for "Land of the non-believers") because its inhabitants were non-Muslims**

Northeastern Afghanistan – Badakshan (Badakhshaan)



Ethnic Groups:
Majority Tajik

Languages:
Dari

Badakhshan (Badakhshaan) Province - Capital: Fayzabad (Fayzabaad)

Geography and Climate:	**Between Hindu Kush and Amu Darya; only province to border China via Wakhan Corridor; prone to earthquakes and seasonal flooding**
Economy:	**Agriculture; rich in natural minerals including Lapis Lazuli, the best in the world**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Believed to be a major drug smuggling route**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Insufficient protection of the Tajik - Afghan border**
Significance:	**Rich in minerals; has attracted China who has helped with reconstruction of roads and infrastructure**

Eastern Region

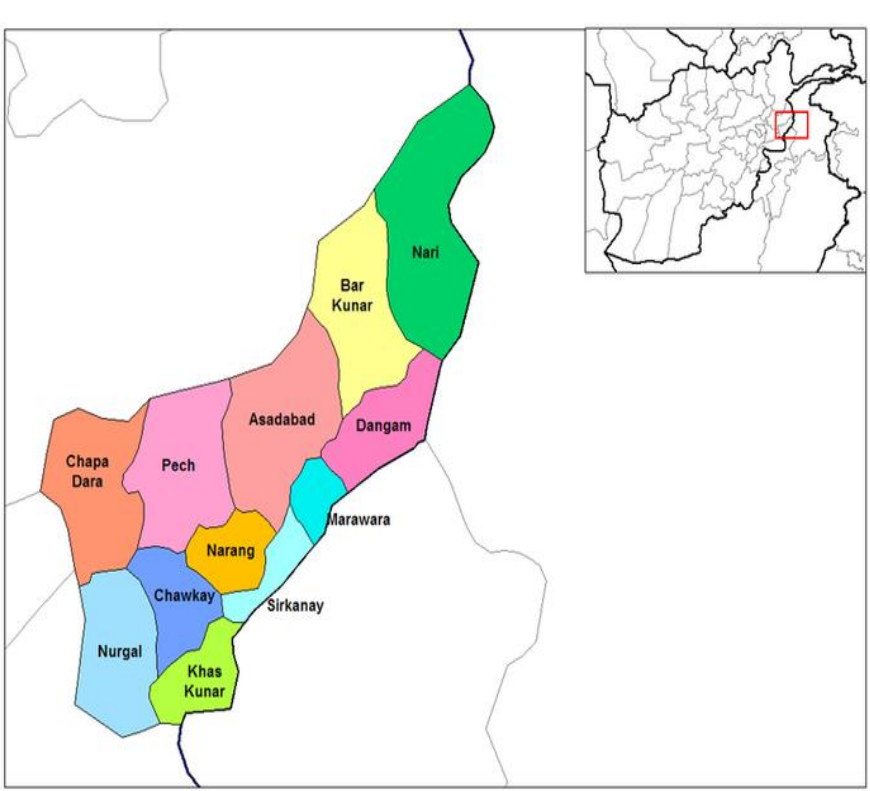
Konar, Nangarhar (Nangarhaar), Lowgar, Paktia, Khost, Paktika, Ghazni, Zabul (Zaabul), Laghman (Laghmaan)



Eastern Region

The eastern region is mountainous. During the summer, the temperatures can exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit and during the winter, the mountains are impassable due to snowfall. With many narrow canyons, valleys, and mountain passes, this region provides treacherous terrain that is perfect for guerilla warfare operations. The Pashtuns are the ethnic majority in this region, with much smaller numbers of Tajiks and Hazaras. The security of the region is threatened by its insecure border with Pakistan, which allows for free migration in both directions and smuggling of the region's natural resources. The region is also known as an insurgent hideout, especially in the province of Konar. The provinces covered in section include Konar, Nangarhar, Lowgar, Paktia, Khost, Paktika, Ghazni, Laghman, and Zabul.

Eastern Afghanistan – Konar



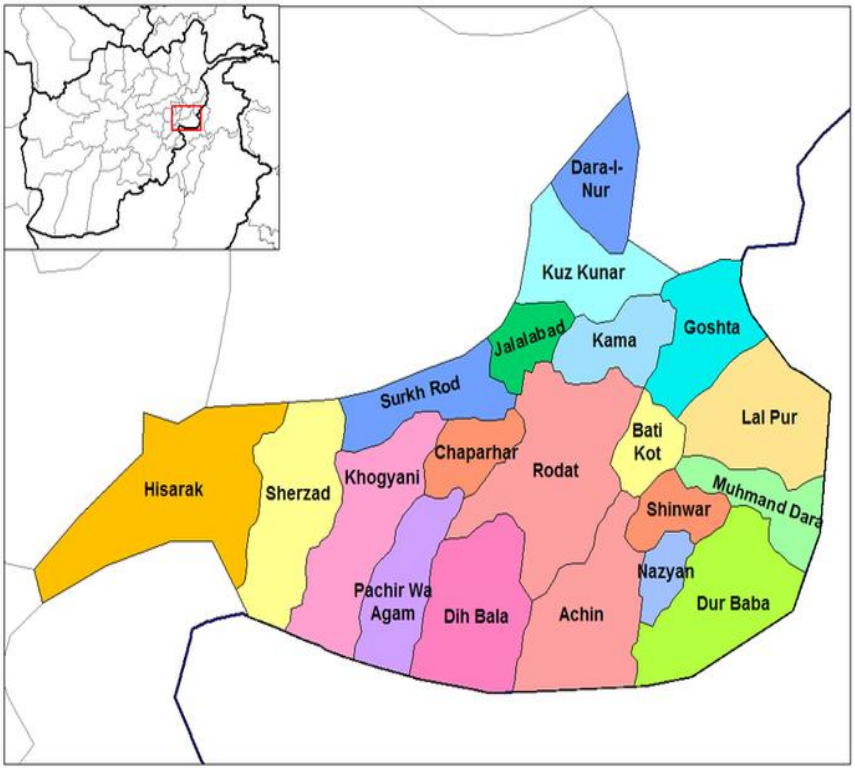
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun - 95%
Nurestani - 5%
Kuchi (seasonal)

Languages:
Pashtu

Konar Province - Capital: Asadabad Asadaabaad

Geography and Climate:	**Embedded in Hindu Kush; heavily mountainous and forested;**
Economy:	**Agriculture, livestock, day labor; some timber (smuggling to and from Pakistan)**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Trafficking of heroin and opium into the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Established base of insurgent groups; possible Al Qaeda sanctuary**
Significance:	**Looting of national assets (timber and gems) is a destabilizing factor for province; with some of the largest forests in Afghanistan, trees are now rapidly being cut down illegally and smuggled to Pakistan**

Eastern Afghanistan – Nangarhar (Nangarhaar)



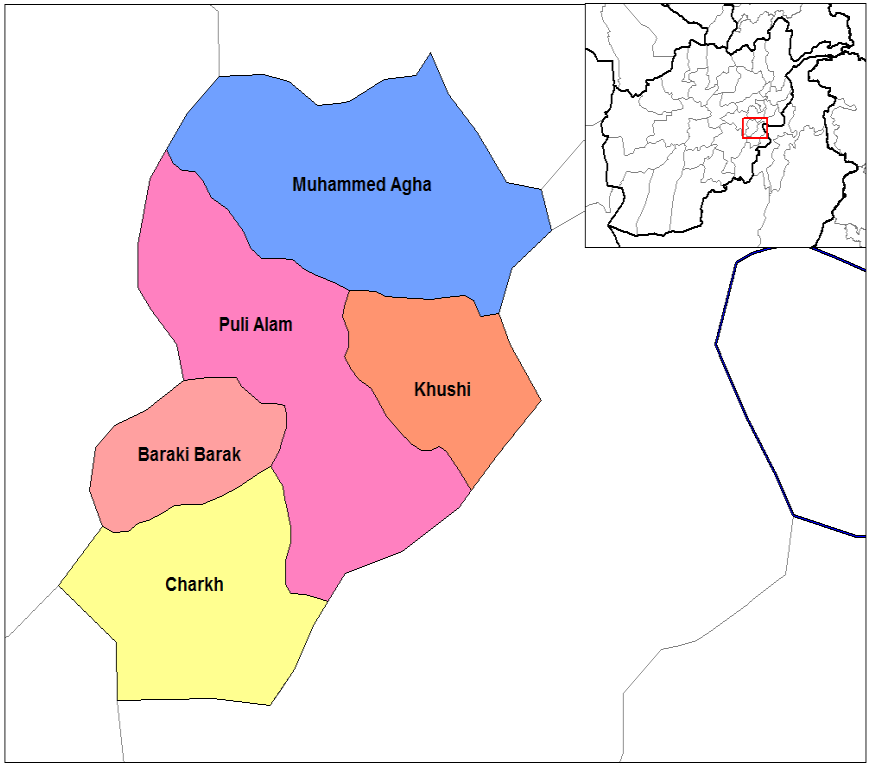
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun - 90%
Pashayee - 7%
Tajiks
Gujar

Languages:
Pashtu - 92%
Dari - 8%

Nangahar (Nangarhaar) Province - Capital: Jalalabad (Jalalaabaad)

Geography and Climate:	More than ½ mountainous; 2/5 flat land
Economy:	½ agriculture; trade and services, citrus fruits
Drug Production/Trafficking:	Opium and cannabis production prevalent; once center of poppy production (95% decrease in 2005)
Dangers/Concerns:	Illegally armed groups, anti-government elements active and heavily armed; migration from and to Pakistan
Significance:	Jalalabad is considered one of the most important cities of the Pashtun culture; the mausoleum of both Amir Habibullah and King Amanullah is located in Jalalabad, and the great Pashtun leader Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (Paachaa Khan) is also buried there.

Eastern Afghanistan – Lowgar



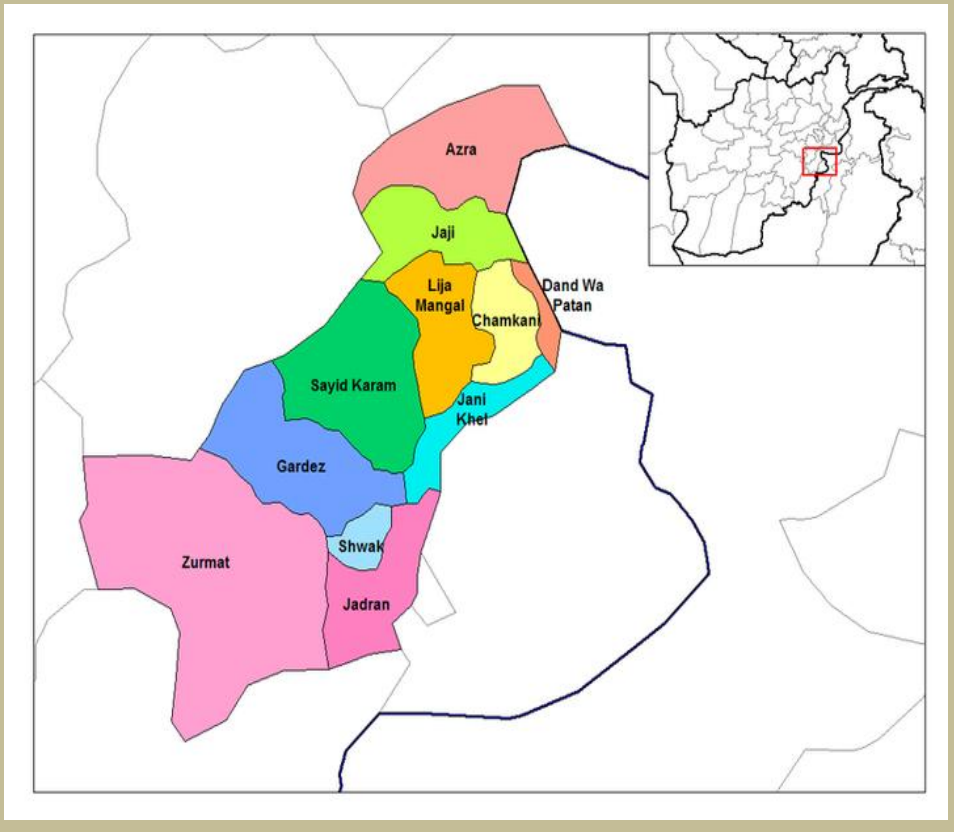
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun - 60%
Tajik/Hazara - 40%

Languages:
Pashtu - 60%
Dari - 40%

Lowgar Province - Capital: Pol-e-‘Alam

Geography and Climate:	**Flat river valley (Lowgar River); rugged mountains in East, South, and Southwest; Tera Pass a critical defensive chokepoint**
Economy:	**Agriculture, livestock; Ainak copper mine, Mohammad Agha mine; rich with minerals**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Consistently poppy-free between 2002 - 2009**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Assessed as medium threat; some anti-personnel mines; Taliban assassinated governor in 2008**
Significance:	**During Soviet-Afghan War, approximately 350 Soviet tanks destroyed in the Tera Pass by the Mujahideen**

Eastern Afghanistan – Paktia



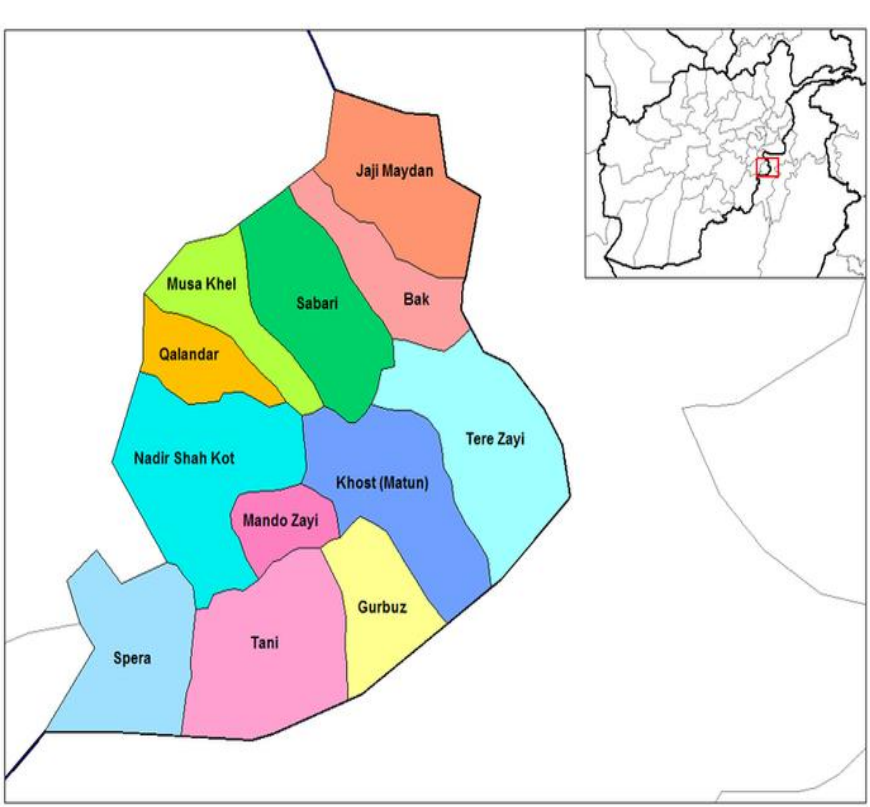
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun - 91%
Tajik - 9%

Languages:
Pashtu

Paktia Province - Capital: Gardez

Geography and Climate:	**Seta – Kandow (KG) Pass in Zadran Arc is the premier mountain range in Paktia.**
Economy:	**Forestry and the mining of chromites and natural gas; grains, crops and apple, walnut, and apricot orchards**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Significant precursor trafficking occurs along the eastern belt of Paktia**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Security situation remains volatile; insurgent presence active or at least present in all Districts**
Significance:	**KG Pass is the historical home to anti-government elements and Haqqani Network; Shah-i Kot Valley in Zormat District, a mountainous region historically used as a base for renegades**

Eastern Afghanistan – Khost



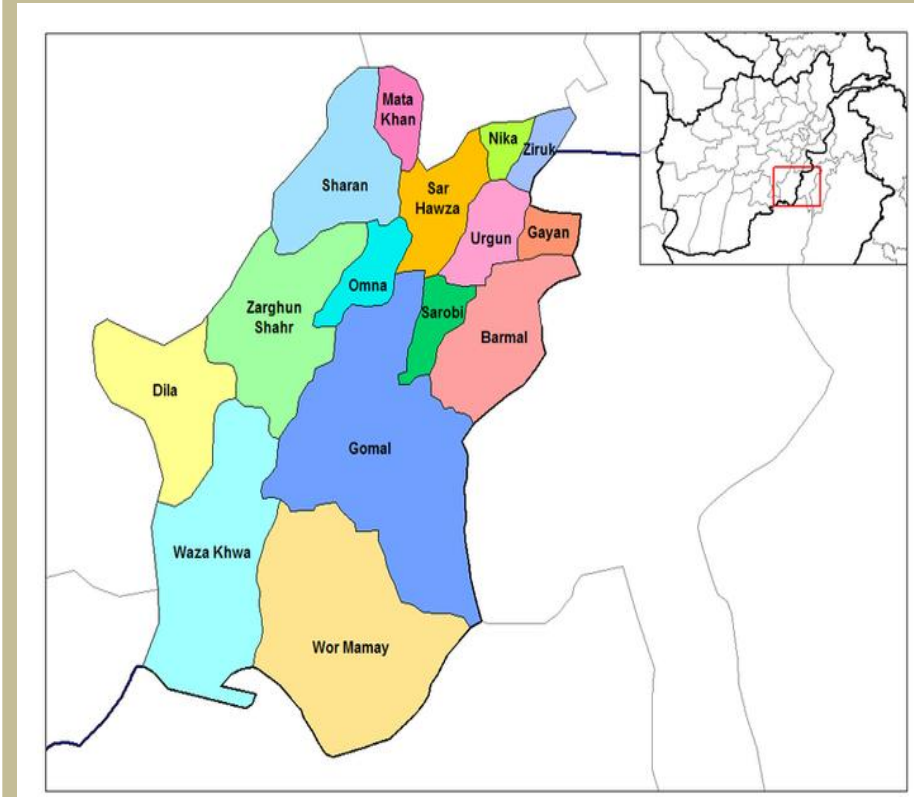
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun - 99%

Languages:
Pashtu

Khost Province - Capital: Khost

Geography and Climate:	**Dominated by the Khost Valley and the mountains that surround it; natural forests run along the border**
Economy:	**Agriculture and animal husbandry**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Heroin and opium are trafficked into the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) region of Pakistan where insurgent groups linked to the Taliban and Al-Qaeda dominate**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Security situation remains volatile with an insurgent presence active or at least present in all districts**
Significance:	**Once part of Paktia province; Khost City the first to be liberated from communist rule during Soviet occupation**

Eastern Afghanistan – Paktika



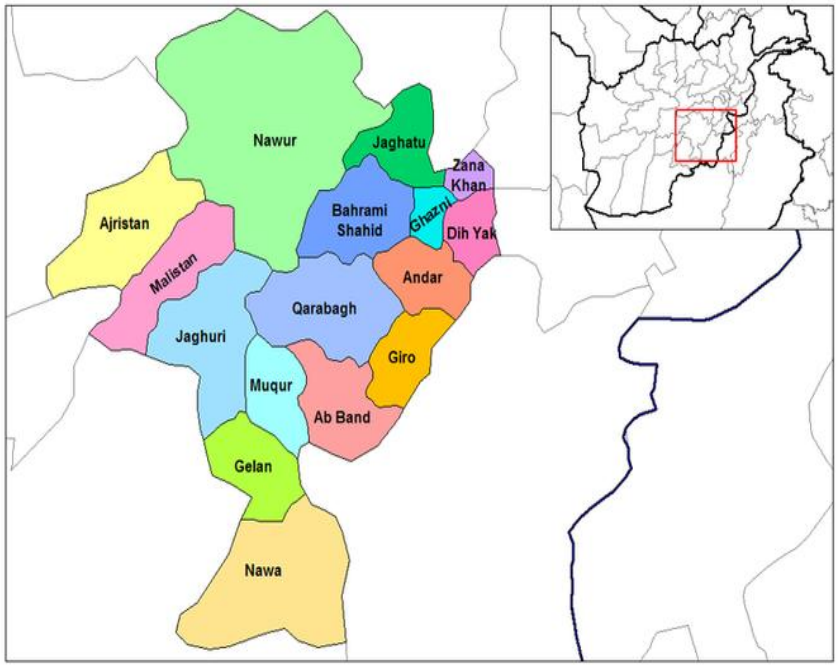
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun

Languages:
Pashtu

Paktika Province - Capital: Sharan

Geography and Climate:	**Arid; high desert; 32% mountainous**
Economy:	**Agriculture and animal husbandry; overall literacy rate in province is extremely low at just 2%**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Heroin and opium are trafficked into the FATA region of Pakistan**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Security situation remains volatile with an insurgent presence active or at least present in all districts**
Significance:	**Once part of Paktia province, was the site of many battles during Soviet occupation**

Eastern Afghanistan – Ghazni



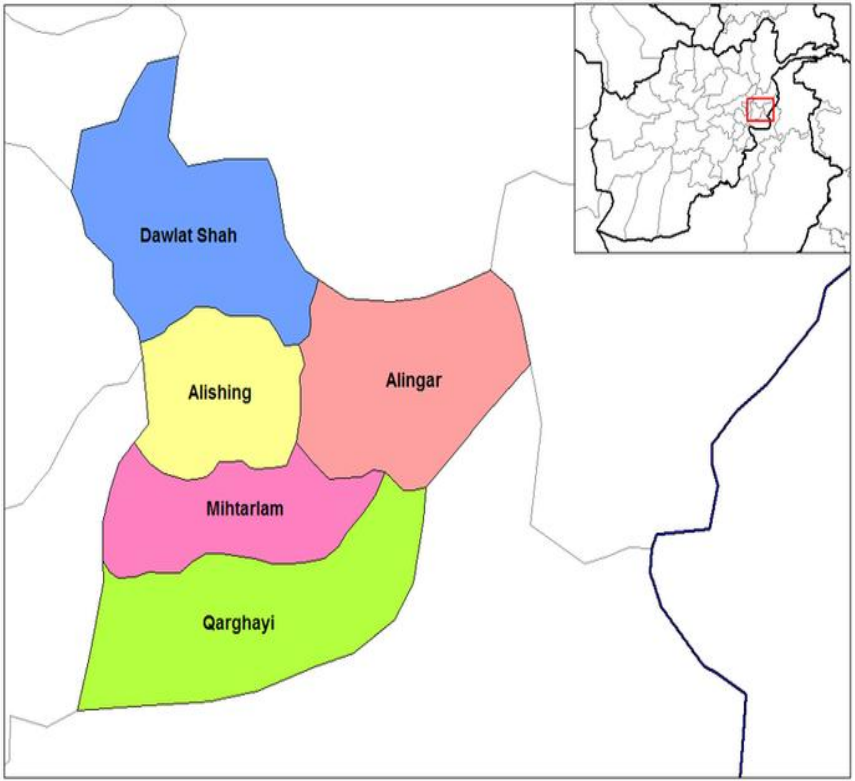
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun - 48.9%
Hazara - 45.9%
Tajik - 4.7%
Kuchis (summer)

Languages:
Pashtu - 51%
Dari - 47%

Ghazni Province - Capital: Ghazni

Geography and Climate:	**Arid; level towards the Southeast, more mountainous and wet toward the Northwest**
Economy:	**Agriculture, animal husbandry and day labor**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Poppy-free**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Security situation remains volatile with an insurgent presence active or at least present in all Pashtun districts; Hazara areas low threat**
Significance:	**Was once the center of the Ghaznavid Empire, which ruled much of India, Central Asia, and Persia**

Eastern Afghanistan – Laghman (Laghmaan)



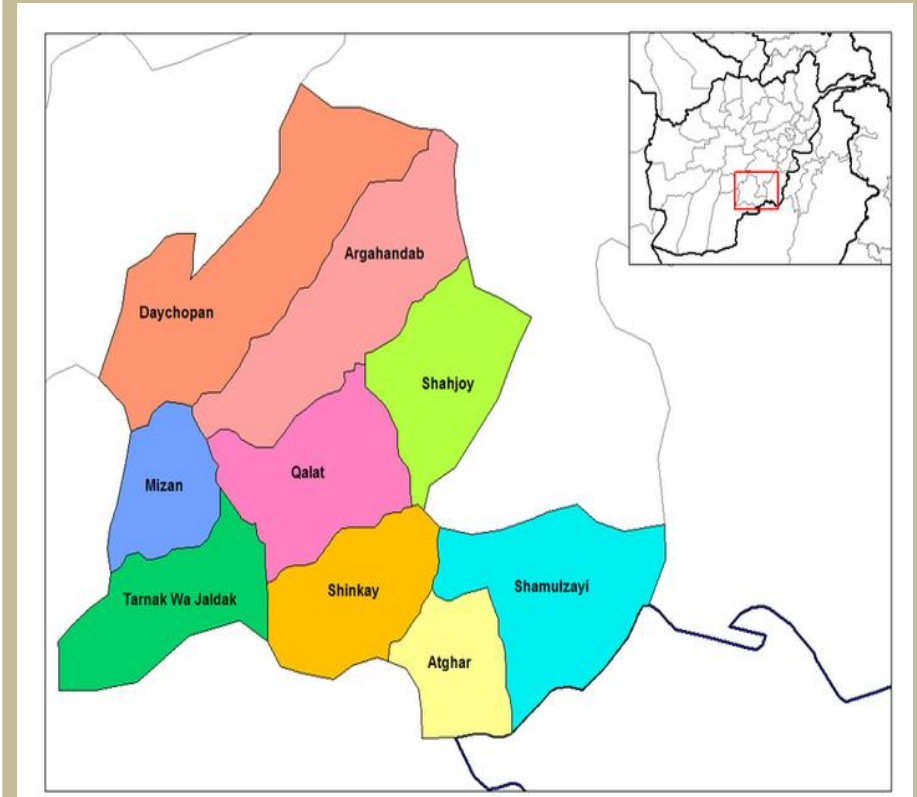
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtuns - 58%
Pashai
Nurestani

Languages:
Pashtu - 58%
Peshayee - 33%
Dari - 9%

Laghman (laghmaan) Province - Capital: Mihtarlam (Mihterlaam)

Geography and Climate:	**55.4% mountainous; 40.9% flat**
Economy:	**Trade and services, non-farm labor, agriculture and livestock; rich with precious stones and minerals**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Some poppy growing; smuggling center for heroin**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Large number of illegally armed groups; active anti-government elements**
Significance:	**Once the center of Mahayanist Buddhism with several monasteries**

Zabul Province - Capital:Qalat (Qalaat)



Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun
Kuchi (seasonal)

Languages:
Pashtu - 80%
Dari - 20%

Zabul Province - Capital:Qalat (Qalaat)

Geography and Climate:	**Remote and sparsely populated; 41% mountainous; arid; severe drought has reduced fertility of the land**
Economy:	**Agricultural communities established along Arghandab and Tarnak rivers; animal husbandry**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Some relatively small scale opium cultivation; widespread trafficking along Ring Road and easy overland access to Pakistan**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Security situation remains volatile with an insurgent presence active or at least present in all districts**
Significance:	**Pashtun residents deeply conservative; infrastructure is largely undeveloped; only Qalat City has electricity and only Ring Road paved**

Central Region
Ghor, Daykundi, Oruzgan (Oruzgaan), Wardak, Kabul, Kapisa Kapisaa, Parvan (Parwaan), Bamyan Bamyaan)



Central Region

The central climate area is generally covered by the Hindu Kush Mountains. Summers can reach temperatures of 100 degrees Fahrenheit and winters will be bitterly cold with very heavy snowfall. The provinces in this area are Ghor, Daykundi, Oruzgan, Wardak, Kabul, Kapisa, Parvan and Bamyan. This area is considered to be a high desert with terrain similar to southern Arizona and the mountains of central Nevada and eastern California. The area hosts a mix of Pashtun, Tajik, and Hazara, with several other groups in smaller numbers. As the physical center of the country, the region has been influenced by several cultural movements and the Silk Road. The Buddhist statues of Bamyan, destroyed by the Taliban in 2001, are a well-known artifact of the region's rich cultural past. The security of the region has deteriorated, especially in Oruzgan and Wardak.

Central Afghanistan – Ghor



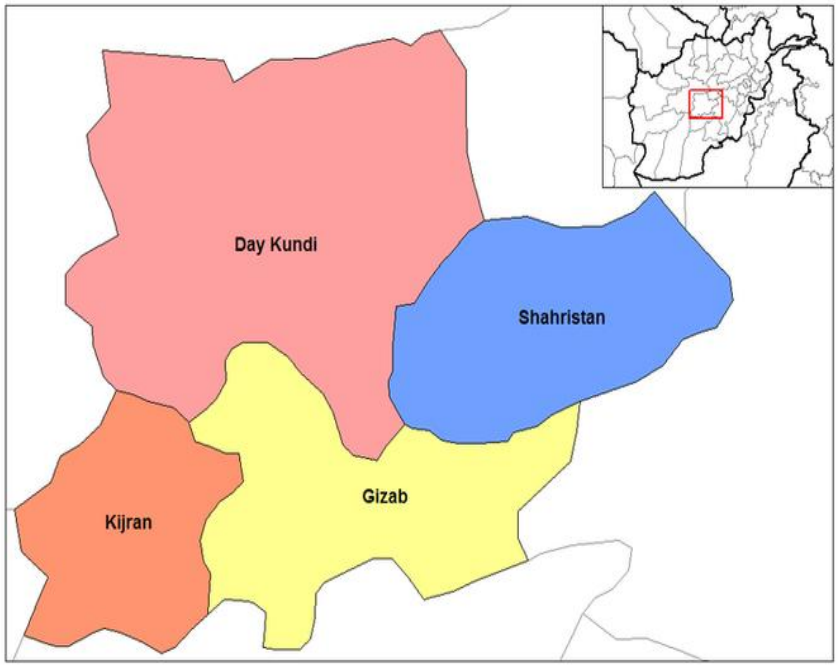
Ethnic Groups:
Tajik - 58%
Hazara - 39%
Pashtun - 3%

Languages:
Dari - 97%
Pashtu - 3%

Ghor Province - Capital: Chaghcharan (Chaghcharaan)

Geography and Climate:	**Extremely mountainous and characterized by small, isolated villages, which are generally inaccessible during the winter months**
Economy:	**Agriculture and animal husbandry**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Was cultivating opium poppy but between 2007 and 2009 had become poppy-free**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Lowest threat province in region**
Significance:	**The Minaret of Jam, the second tallest minaret in the world, built in 12th century , discovered in 1943 and is a national treasure, is located in a remote valley on the banks of the Hari Rud River**

Central Afghanistan – Daykundi



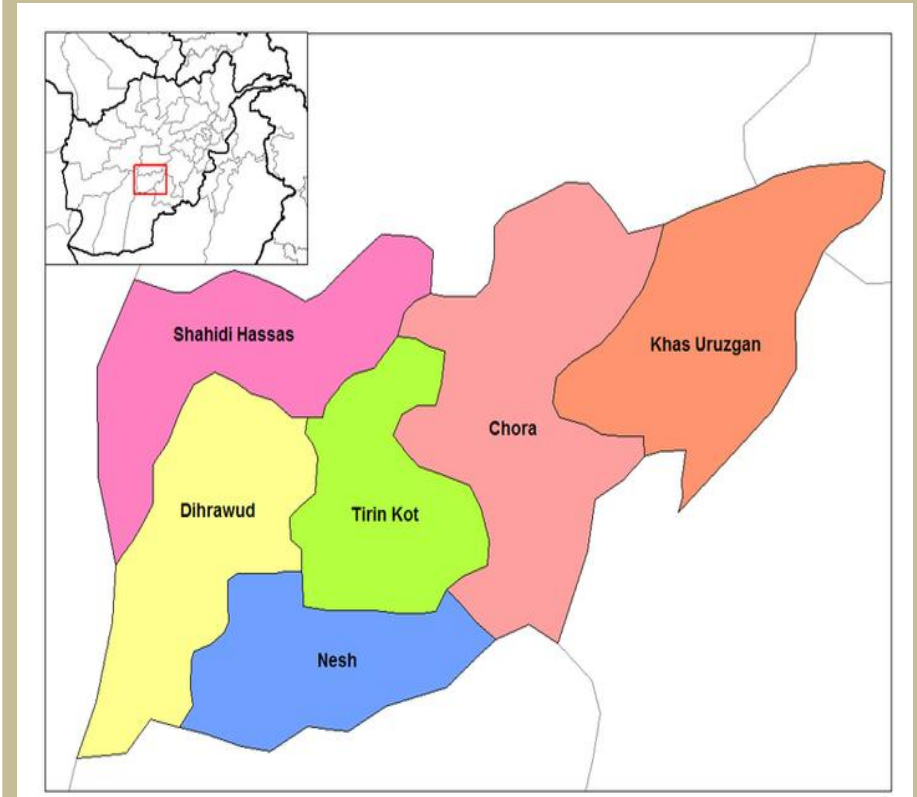
Ethnic Groups:
Hazara - 86%
Pashtun - 8.5%
Baluch - 3.5%

Languages:
Dari - 91%
Pashtu - 13%

Daykundi Province - Capital: Nili (Neelee)

Geography and Climate:	**90% of terrain mountainous**
Economy:	**Agriculture; 99% of the population of Daykundi lives in rural districts while 1% live in urban areas**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Primary transit route for traffickers who transport drugs from the north of Bamyan to the south of Daykundi to provinces like Helmand and Oruzgan**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Gizab (Gizaab) District recently under Taliban control (Pashtun-populated Gizab annexed to Oruzgan province in 2006, but change not shown on maps)**
Significance:	**Part of ethnic region of Hazarajat; Nili first city to have female mayor (Ms. Azra Jafari)**

Central Afghanistan – Oruzgan (Oruzgaan)



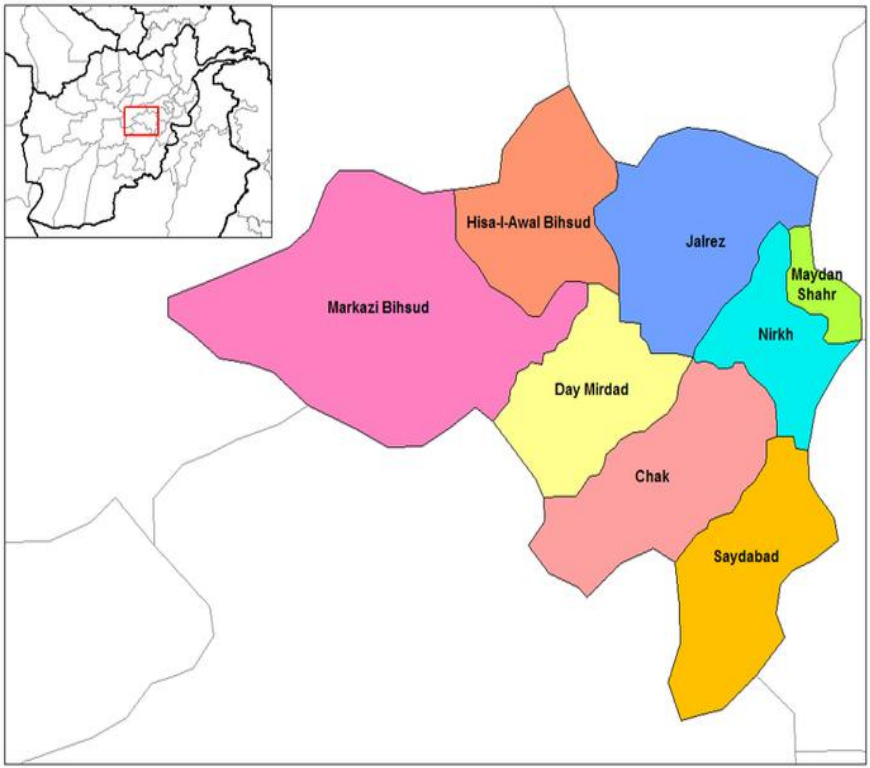
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun
Hazara
Kuchi (seasonal)

Languages:
Pashtu - 90%
Dari

Oruzgan (Oruzgaan) Province - Capital: Tirin Kot (Teenreen Koat)

Geography and Climate:	**Around three quarters of the province (72%) is mountainous or semi mountainous terrain**
Economy:	**Agriculture (grains, apricots, and almonds) was the primary source of livelihood that used to form most of the dry fruit export of Afghanistan, but many farmers have switched to poppy production**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Opium is now the province's main source of revenue**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Security situation remains volatile with an insurgent presence active or at least present in all districts**
Significance:	**Well-known as the birthplace of Taliban leader Mullah Omar**

Central Afghanistan – Wardak



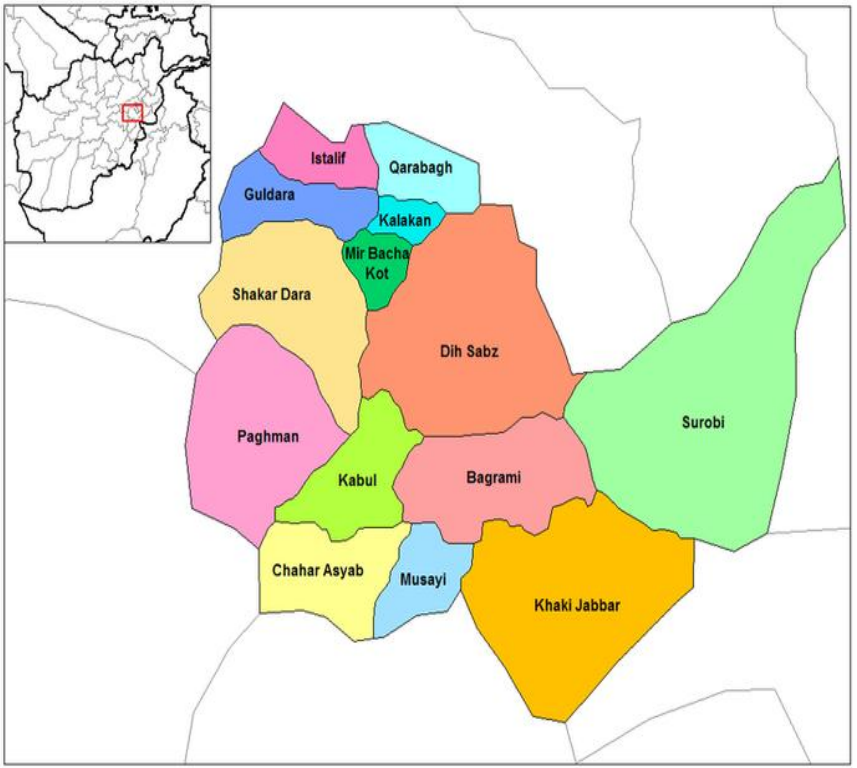
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun - 70%
Hazara/Tajik - 27%

Languages:
Majority Pasthu
Some Dari

Wardak Province - Capital: Maidan (Maidaan) Shar (Shaar)

Geography and Climate:	**4/5 mountainous; Southern outcrops of Hindus Kush**
Economy:	**Trade, agriculture and livestock; stone quarrying; marble factory; marble mines inactive**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**After five years of continuous cultivation, the province has regained its original poppy-free status as of 2008**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Increasing physical presence of Taliban; lack of confidence in government; land disputes between Hazara and Kuchi**
Significance:	**During the Soviet Afghan war, much of the population emigrated from the province to Iran (Hazara) and Pakistan (Pashtun), and many have returned since the fall of the Taliban, putting a strain on the already damaged infrastructure.**

Central Afghanistan – Kabul



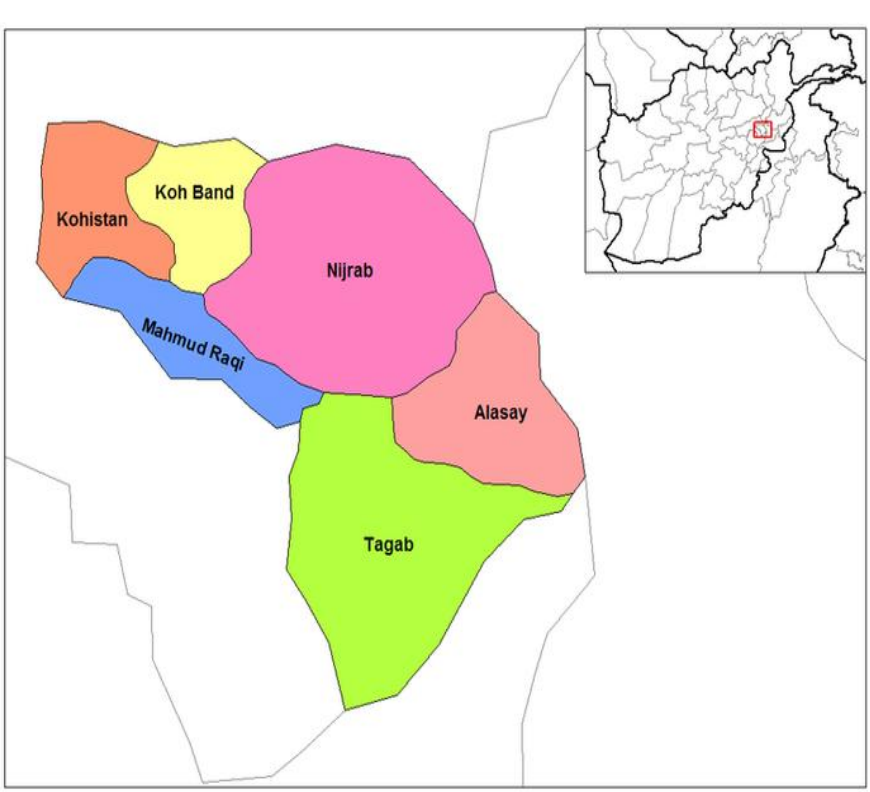
Ethnic Groups:
Pashtun - 60%
Tajik
Hazara
Uzbek
Turkmen
Baluch
Sikh
Hindu

Languages:
Pashtu
Dari

Kabul Province - Capital: Kabul City (Capital of Afghanistan)

Geography and Climate:	**Valley at crossroad; Kabul River; Arid, semi-arid steppe; low precipitation, dry and dusty**
Economy:	**Industrial; international trade partners spy services from many countries**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Drug route connecting South to North; Route to Pakistan; Small cultivation in Surobi**
Dangers/Concerns:	**As capital, security imperative; target of high profile and complex suicide attacks**
Significance:	**Was center of Zoroastrianism; occupied by many forces to include: British, Soviets, Taliban; destroyed by civil war after Soviet departure**

Central Afghanistan – Kapisa (Kapisaa)



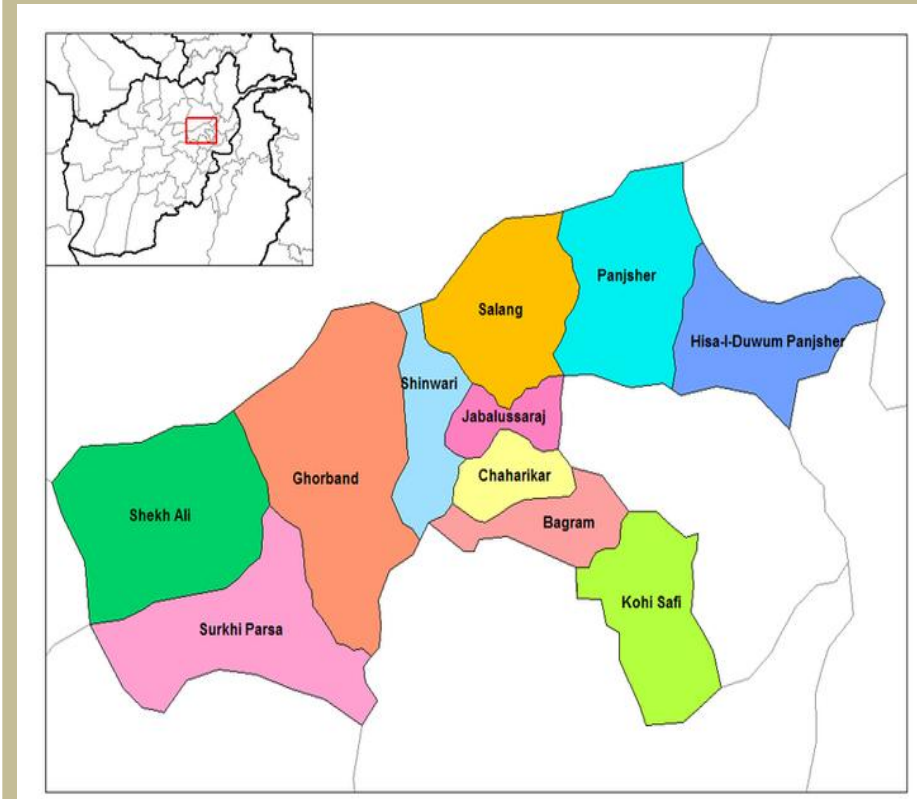
Ethnic Groups:
Tajik - 30%
Pashtun - 27%
Pashai - 17%
Nurestani

Languages:
Dari
Some Pashtu

Kapisa (Kaapeesaa)Province - Capital: Mahmud Raqi (Raaqee)

Geography and Climate:	Partially surrounded by mountains and rivers
Economy:	Agriculture; talc mine; “Mela” – trade day once/week
Drug Production/Trafficking:	At one time a huge location of poppy cultivation, but has become poppy-free
Dangers/Concerns:	Satisfactory security
Significance:	Destroyed by Cyrus the Great; part of Buddhist kingdom; known for its wine

Central Afghanistan – Parvan (Pawaan)



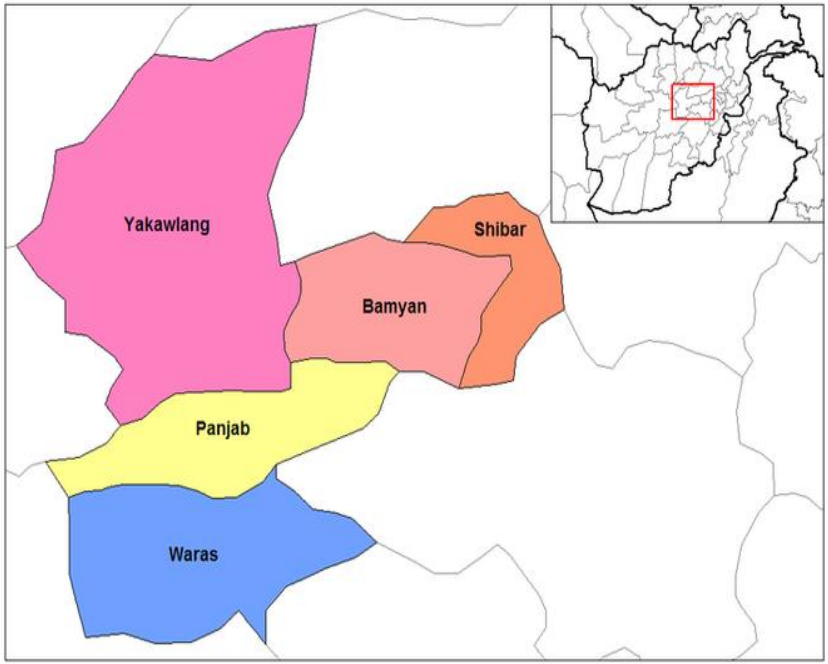
Ethnic Groups:
Tajik/Hazara - 71%
Pashtun - 29%

Languages:
Dari - 70%
Pashtu - 30%

Parvan (Parwaan) Province - Capital: Charikar (Chaarikaar)

Geography and Climate:	**2/3 mountainous; 1/4 flat land; Pawaan River; main route from Kabul to North; Salang Road**
Economy:	**Industrial crops; herbs**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Regained its original opium poppy free status in 2008 (and continued to be poppy free in 2009) after five years of continuous cultivation between 2003 and 2007**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Relatively secure**
Significance:	**Long history of battles; 1840 – defeat British; resisted Soviets and Taliban**

Central Afghanistan – Bamyan (Bamyaan)



Ethnic Groups:
Majority Hazara
Tajik - 15%
Tatars

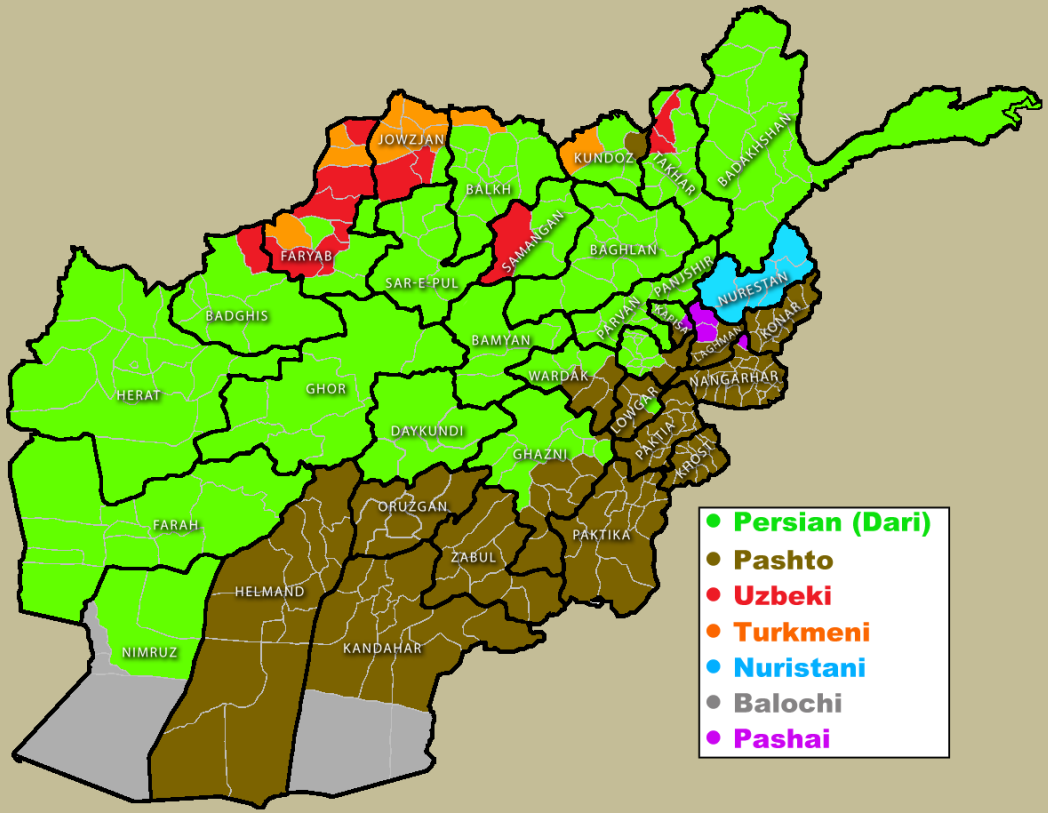
Languages:
Dari - 96%
Some Pashtu

Bamyan Province - Capital: Bamyan (Bamyaan)

Geography and Climate:	**Dry mountainous terrain; several rivers, including Punjab; Band-e-Amir lakes**
Economy:	**Agriculture, livestock; day labor secondary**
Drug Production/Trafficking:	**Some reports of trafficking; small scale poppy cultivation**
Dangers/Concerns:	**Many landmines**
Significance:	**Cultural capital of Hazaras; generally opposed to Taliban; strategically placed to thrive from Silk Road; Buddhists of Bamyan statues destroyed by Taliban; first female governor**

Language Guide

Major Languages



LANGUAGE GUIDE

- **Dari (Afghan Persian/Farsi) and Pashtu are the official languages of Afghanistan**
- **Pashtu was declared the National Language of the country during the beginning of King Zahir in 1933; however, Dari has always been used for business and government transactions**
- **Pashtu is primarily spoken in Southern areas and the Eastern areas bordering Pakistan; Dari is used in much of the rest of the country**
- **Dari only differs slightly from Persian Farsi; both use the same alphabet**
- **Pashtu has an alphabet distinct from Farsi/Dari; there are two main dialects (Southern and Northern) that slightly vary from one another (all dialects are mutually understood by all Pashtu speakers)**
- **A significant percentage of the vocabulary of both languages is borrowed from Arabic**

Directions

*rooba roowi
makhamakh

straight

*shamaal
shamaal

N

*gharb
gharb

W

E

*sharq
sharq

*maabayn
po manz ke

between

*chap
chop

left

S

*junoob
junoob

*raas
khe

right

*Dari transliteration on top / Pashtun on bottom

General Terminology

Dari

Hello	Reply
salaam	salaam

Hello(formal)	Good Evening
salaam alaykum	soub bakhair
Reply	**Reply**
waalaykum asalaam	soub bakhair

Goodbye	Reply
khudaa aafayz	khudaa aafayz

How are you?	I am fine
chetoor astayn?	khoob astum

Please	Thank you	Reply
lutfan	tashakur	khoyesh maykonum

Yes	No	This/that	Here/there
balay	nay	ee/oo	eenja/oonja

Do you understand?	I don't understand	Sorry
faameedayn?	na faameedum	bobakhshayn

Can you repeat that	Speak slowly	Show me
takraar kounayn?	aastaa-staa gap bayzanayn	neshaan betayn

I	you	they	he/she/it
ma	shumaa (pl/polite) too (sg/familiar)	oonaa	oo

yours	theirs
az ahumaa	az oonaa

Pashtu

Hello	Reply
Salaamu alaikum	Walaikum salaam

Good morning	Good Evening
Sahaar pa khair	Mashaam pa khair

Goodbye	Reply
De khuday pa amaan	Pa makha de sha

How are you?	I am fine
Tsunga ye?	Za sha yam

Please	Thank you	Reply
Lutfan	Manana	Hila kawam

Yes	No	This/that	Here/there
Ho	Na	Dagha/Hagha	Dalta/Halta

Do you understand?	I don't understand
Taase puhezhai?	Za na puhezham

Can you repeat that	Speak slowly
Taase byaa wayalai sai?	Qaraar wawaayaast

Show me
Maa te washayaast

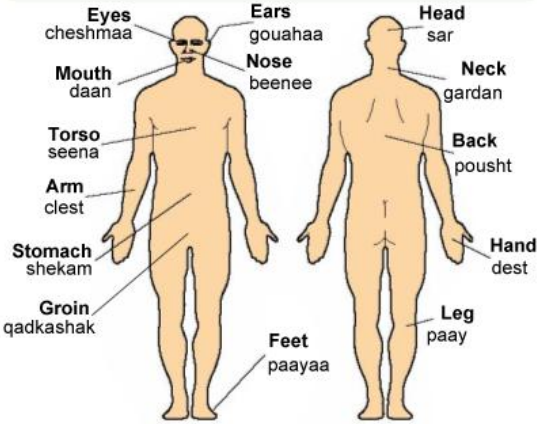
I	you	they	he	she
Za	taase	haghoi	hagha	hagha

yours	theirs
staasi	De haghoi

Medical Terminology

Dari

Where is the pain? kujaa-ayt dard maykona?
Where are you injured? kujaa-ayt zakhmee shuda?



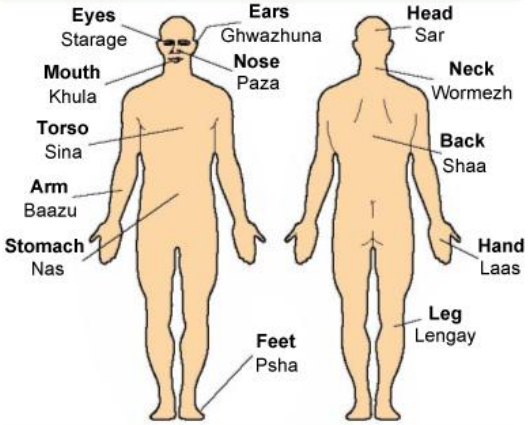
I am going to dress the wound
ma zakhama paansmaan maykonum
I am going to give you an injection
ma sumaa-ra petchkoree maykonum
I am going to give you this medicine
ma be shumaa ee dawaa-ra maytum

Hospital shafaakhaana	**Doctor** daaktar	**Sick** mareez
Wounded zakhmee	**Shot** marmee khoorda	**Burnt** soukhta

Injury zakhem	**Infection** zakhem meekroubee	**Blood** khoon	**Bandage** baandaazh
Dead mourda	**Medicine** dawaa	**Injection** petchkoree	

Pashtu

Where is the pain? Dard cheri day?
Where are you injured? Zakham cheri day?



I am going to dress the wound
Za pa zakham patai lagawam
I am going to give you an injection
Za taase te pechkaari lagawam
I am going to give you this medicine
Za taase te dagha darmal darkawam

Hospital Roghtun	**Doctor** Daaktar	**Sick** Naarogh
Wounded Zakhmi	**Shot** Wishtalay	**Burnt** Swadzedalay

Injury Zakham	**Blood** Wina	**Bandage** Patai
Dead Maray	**Medicine** Darmal	**Injection** Pechkaari

Directions/Orders

Dari

Stop (person)	Stop (a vehicle)	Stop or I'll shoot	Do not move
draysh	draysh	draysh aga nay faeer maykounum	shour nakhou

Do not shoot	Do not raise your weapon	Surrender
faeer nakou	salaaeeta baalaa nakou	tasleem shou

Put your weapon down	Hands up	Lie down	Sit down
salaaeeta pertou	destaa baalaa	prout kou	beeshee

Get up	Turn around	Walk forward (to me)	Walk forward (away from me)
estaad shou	daor bukhou	paysh byo	door burou

Come here	Come out	Stay there	Stay here
eenia bjaa	beeroon byaa	oonja beash	eenja beash

Move	Hurry	Be quiet	Hands down
arakat kou	ajala kou	khaamoosh baash	destaa paayeen

Please open the door	Open the door
lutfan darwaazara waaz konayn	darwaazara waaz kou

Can we come in and ask you some questions?	Can I see your papers?
maytaanayn daroun byaayaym ou az shumaa chand sawaal kounayn?	maytaanum asnaadaitouna bebeenum?

We must search you	We must search your house
maa beayad shumaara talashee konaym	maa beayad khaana-ay shumaara talashee konaym

You are free to go	You are under arrest	Disperse
maytonayn burayn	bendeet maykonum	door shawayn

Go home	Go away	Form a line	One at a time
khaana burayn	bunou	lain shawayn	yak yak nafer

Pashtu

Stop (person)	Stop (a vehicle)	Stop or I'll shoot	Do not move
Drezh	Wadrezha	Drezh yaa za daz kawam	Ma shora

Do not shoot	Do not raise your weapon	Surrender
Daz ma kawa	Khpala wasla ma akhla	Taslim

Put your weapon down	Hands up	Lie down	Sit down
Khpala wasla kshezhdai	Laasuna porta	Prot	Kshenai

Get up	Turn around	Walk forward
Porta sai	Shaa garzd	Makh te dzai

Come here	Come out	Stay there	Stay here
Dalta raasai	Raa wawdzai	Halta paata sai	Dalta paata sai

Move	Hurry	Be quiet	Hands down
Dzai	Zhar	Chup sai	Lasuna kshata

Please open the door	Open the door
Lutfan darwaaza khlaasa krai	Darwaaza khlaasa krai

Can we come in and ask you some questions?	Can I see your papers?
Muzh danana tlai su, ao tso pushtane kawalai su?	Za staase asnaad katalai sam?

We must search you	We must search your house
Muzh taase talaashi kawu	Muzh staase kor talaashi kawu

You are free to go	You are under arrest
Taase tlay sai	Taase bandyaan yaast

Disperse	Go home	Go away	Form a line	One at a time
Khwaara sai	Korta dzai	Hista dzai	Qataar sai	Pa waar yao

People

Dari

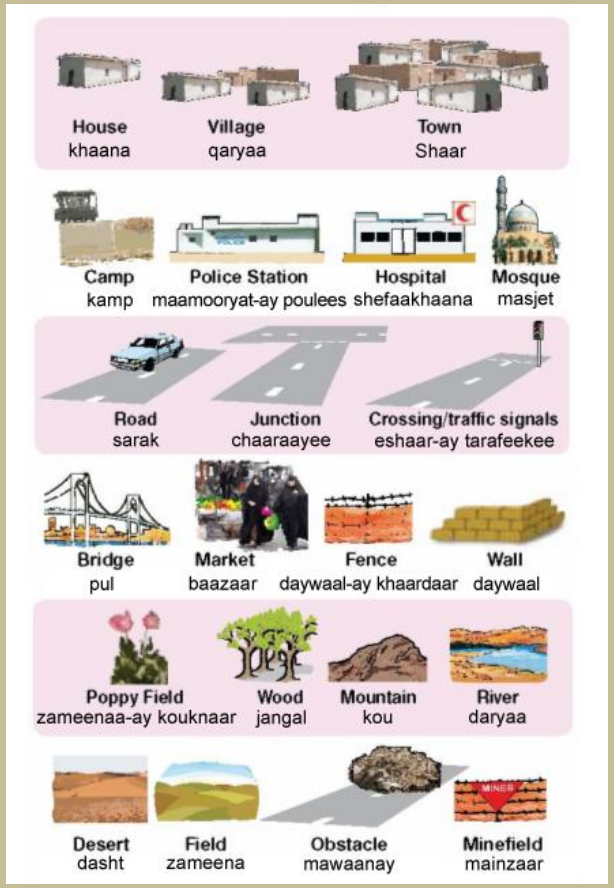


Pashtu

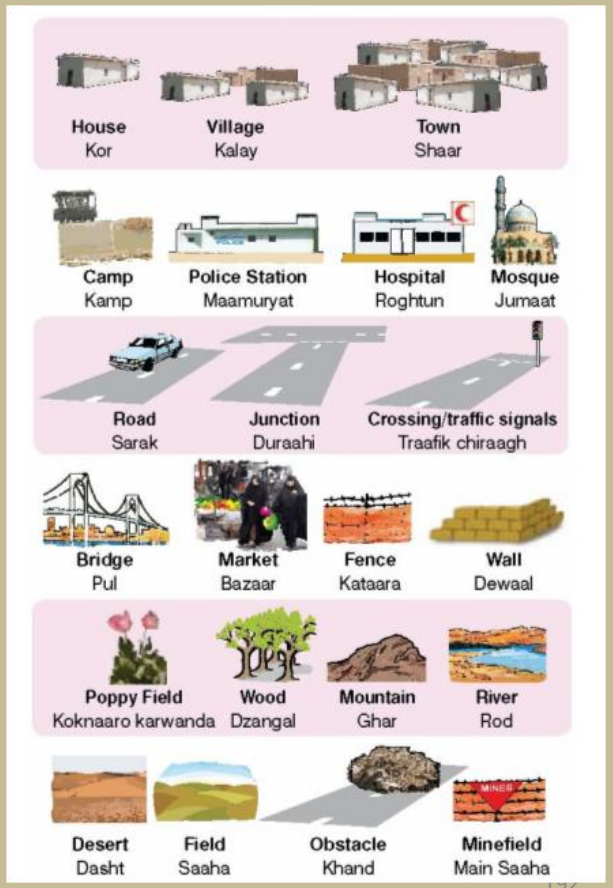


Places

Dari



Pashtu



General Questions

Dari		Pashtu
WHEN	che wakht?	**WHEN** Kala?
When did this happen?	ee chee wakht shud?	**When did this happen?** Hagha kala waswal?
WHERE	kujaa?	**WHERE** Cheri?
Where are you from?	az kujaa astayn?	**Where are you from?** Taase de kum dzay yaast?
Where are you going?	kujaa mayrayn?	**Where are you going?** Taase cheri dzai?
Where did this happen?	da kujaa waaqee shud?	**Where did this happen?** Hagha cheri wasu?
Where is?	... kujaas?	**Where is?** Cheri day?
Where are?	... kujaastan?	**Where are?** Cheri di?
WHAT	chee?	**WHAT** Tse?
What do you want?	chee maykhoyayn?	**What do you want?** Taase tse ghwaarai?
What is your name?	naam-ay shumma chees?	**What is your name?** Staase num tse day?
What time?	chand bajas?	**What time?** Tse wakht?
WHO	kee?	**WHO** Tsok?
Who are you?	keestayn	**Who are you?** Taase tsok yaast?
Who were they?	oonaakee boodan?	**Who were they?** Haghoi tsok wu?
WHICH direction?	koodaam taraf?	**WHICH direction?** Kume khwaa?
HOW many? (for object)	chad daana?	**HOW many?** Tsumra?
many? (for person)	chand nafar?	**How far?** Tsumra lare?
How far?	cheqa door?	
DO YOU have?	... daarayn?	**DO YOU have?** Taase larai?
Do you have ID (or ID card)?	tazkira (kaard-ay hooyat) daarayn?	**Do you have ID?** Taase pezhand paana larai?
Do you have weapons?	salaa daarayn?	**Do you have weapons?** Taase wasla larai?
DO YOU need?	... kaar daarayn?	**DO YOU need?** Taase artya larai?
Do you need help?	koumak kaar daarayn?	**Do you need help?** Taase mraste te artyaa larai?
Do you need water?	ao kaar daarayn?	**Do you need water?** Taase wabo te artyaa larai?

Time

Dari

How long ago?	cheqa wakht paysh?
How long until?	taa chee wakht?
O'clock	Baja



Before	paysh az
After	baad az

5 minutes	**10 minutes**	
panj daqa	da daqa	
15 minutes	**20 minutes**	**30 minutes**
paanzda daqa	beest daqa	see daqa
1 hour	**Hour**	
yak saat	saat	

Today	**Yesterday**	**Tomorrow**	**This week**	**This month**
emrouz	deerouz	fardaa	ee afta	ee maa

Next week	**Next month**
afta-ay aayenda	maa-ay aayenda
Last week	**Last month**
afta-ay paysh	maa-ay paysh

Morning	soub
Afternoon	bad az chaast
Evening	shaam
Day	rouz
At Night	da shaow
Now	aalay
Later	pasaan

Saturday	shambay
Sunday	yakshambay
Monday	dushambay
Tuesday	sayshambay
Wednesday	chaarshambay
Thursday	penjshambay
Friday	jooma

Pashtu

How long ago?	Tsumra pa khwaa?
How long until?	Tar kala?
O'clock	Baje

Before	Makhke
After	Wrusta

5 minutes	**10 minutes**	
Pindza daqiqe	Las daqiqe	
15 minutes	**20 minutes**	**30 minutes**
Pindzalas daqiqe	Shal daqiqe	Dersh daqiqe
1 hour	**Hour**	
Yaw saat	Saat	

Today	**Yesterday**	**Tomorrow**	**This week**	**This month**
Nan	Parun	Sabaa	Dagha wunai	Dagha myaast

Next week	**Next month**
Raarawaana wunai	Raarawaana myaast
Last week	**Last month**
Ter wunai	Tera myaast

Morning	Sahaar
Afternoon	Gharma
Evening	Mashaam
Day	Wradz
At Night	Deshpe
Now	Wus
Later	Wrusta

Saturday	Shamba
Sunday	Yakshamba
Monday	Dushamba
Tuesday	Seshamba
Wednesday	Chaarshamba
Thursday	Panjshamba
Friday	Juma

Check Point Terminology

Dari



moutar | bei four | laree | shutur



Switch off the engine
moutar gul kou



moutarsekel



baisekel



karachee



Get out of the car
az moutar
paayaan shou

Turn off the lights
cheraaghaa-ayta
gul kou

SHOW ME **Your vehicle registration**
asnod moutareta neshaan betayn

Show me your driving licence
layeanseta neshaan betayn

Show me your weapon authorisation card
kart-ay salaaeeta neshaan betayn

We must search your car
maa baayad moutareta talashee konaym



Open the hood
baanateta woz kou



Open the trunk
toolbakseta woz kou

Close the hood
beanateta besta kou

Close the trunk
toolbakseta besta kou

You may go
maytaanee buree



surkh



naarenjee

zard



sabz



aabee



naswaaree



safayd



syaa

Pashtu



Motar | For bai for | Laarai | Wush



Switch off the engine
Motar band krai



Motarsikal



Baaisikal



Karaachai



Get out of the car
La motar raawao dzai

Turn off the lights
Chiraghuna gwal krai

SHOW ME **Your vehicle registration**
De motar asnaad shkaara krai

Show me your driving licence
Staase jawaaz shkaara krai

Show me your weapon authorisation card
De wasle jawaaz shkaara krai

We must search your car
Muzh staase motar talaashi kawu



Open the hood
Baanat khlaas krai



Open the trunk
Shaa khlaasa krai

Close the hood
Baanat band krai

Close the trunk
Shaa banda krai

You may go
Taase tlai sai



Sur



Naaranji

Zhar



Zarghun



Shin



Naswaari



Spin



Tor

Weapons

Dari



Pashtu



Vocabulary

Basic Words

English	Dari	Pashtu
hello	salaam	as-salaamu ‘alaykum
welcome	khoosh aamadeyn	kha raaghlaast
no	ney	na
yes	baley	ho
please	lutfan	mehrabaanee
excuse me	mey bakhshee	bakhana ghwaalum
right	durust	sahee
wrong	ghalat	ghalat

Vocabulary

Basic Phrases

English	Dari	Pashtu
good morning	Sobh ba khayr	as-salaamu ‘alaykum
good evening	shab ba khayr	shpa mo pa khayr
goodbye	baamaane khudaa	da khoday pa amaan
How are you?	chutoor haste?	Zhenga yae
you are safe	bare shumaa khtar neys	khater nashta
my name is _____	naam maa _____ as	zmaa_noom___dai
What is your name?	name shumaa cheest ?	staa num tsa deh ?
I am fine, thanks	khoob astum, tashakur	zeh khe yum manana

Vocabulary

Survival

English	Dari	Pashtu
Do you speak English?	englisi yaad dawri?	ta pe inglisee khabaree kawaley shee?
What is your name?	name shumaa cheest?	staa num tsa deh?
calm down	aaraam baash	aaraam sha
you are safe	bare shumaa khatar nayst	taaso ta kom khatar neshta
Where is _____?	_____ da kujass?	_____cheeree dai?
How many?	chand taw?	Tso daanae?

Vocabulary

Survival

English	Dari	Pashtu
shelter	panaagaah	panaagaah
medicine	dawaa	dawaa
Do you need help?	shumaa ba kumak zaroorat daareen?	kamak ta zaroorat laray?
weapons	asleha	wasley
minefield	mayn daar	da maayn saha
danger area	saayey khatar	khatar naaka seema
What direction?	kudaam taraff?	kumee khwaata?

Vocabulary

Survival

English	Dari	Pashtu
Do you have_____?	shumaa_____daarin ?	tasey_____larey?
Where?	kujaa?	cheeree?
What?	chee?	tse shey?
Who?	kee?	tsok?
Why?	cheraa?	walee?
help me	mara komak ko	zamaa sara marasta woka
water	aoo	ooba
food	naan	dwodey

Vocabulary

Command and Control

English	Dari	Pashtu
form a line	lavin shawain	pa qataar ke wadaregai
surrender	taslim sho	taslim sha
speak slowly	ahesta gap bezan	karaar khabaree kawa
calm down	araam baash	aaraam sha
Who is in charge?	Aamer key ast?	tsok salaahiyat larey?

Numerals

US	Dari	Pashtun	US	Dari	Pashtun
0	sefer	sifar	9	no	naha
1	yak	yaw	10	da	las
2	doo	dwa	11	yaazdaa	yolas
3	sey	drey	12	duwaazdaa	dowolas
4	chaar	salor	13	seyzdaa	diyaarlas
5	panj	pinza	14	chaardaa	swaarlas
6	shash	shpag	15	panzdaa	peenzalas
7	haft	oowa	16	shaanzdaa	shpaglas
8	hasht	ata	17	havdaa	woo-las

Numerals Cont.

US	Dari	Pashtu	US	Dari	Pashtu
18	hazh-daa	ata-las	90	nawad	navee
19	nuzdaa	Non-as	100	sad	sel
20	beest	shel	1,000	yak hazaar	zer
30	see	dersh	10,000	daa-azaar	las zer
40	chel	tsalweiKht	100,000	yak sad-azaar	sel zera
50	penjaa	panzohs	Million	yak melyoon	milyon
60	shast	shpeeta	first	awal	lomlay
70	haftaad	aweyah	second	du-wam	dohom
80	hashtaad	ateyah	third	sey-wum	dreyam

Cultural Proverbs, Expressions, and Idioms

- **Tajik proverb says "A person's navel is on his belly while the world's navel is on the Pamirs."**
- **"There is a path to the top of the highest mountain."**
- **"The first day you meet, you are friends. The next day you meet, you are brothers."**
- **"Don't stop a donkey that is not yours." Meaning to mind your own business.**
- **"Blood cannot be washed out with blood."**
- **"No rose is without thorns."**
- **"Without investigating the water, don't take off your shoes to walk through it."**
- **"A liar is forgetful."**
- **"You can't clap with one hand." There is strength in union.**
- **"A river is made drop by drop." Step by step, precept by precept.**
- **"The right answer to a fool is silence." Silence is golden.**
- **"Don't show me the palm tree, show me the dates."**
- **"What you see in yourself is what you see in the world."**
- **"Vinegar that is free is sweeter than honey." People love getting something for nothing.**
- **"A wise enemy is better than a foolish friend." Seek good advice.**
- **"Fear the person who doesn't fear God."**
- **"Glory is fitting to God alone." A person should not be proud.**

Afghan Superstitions

- If your foot touches or hits another person's foot, you will get into a fight with that person, unless you shake hands right away.
- If a baby has jaundice, let the baby lick on cleaned gold and the jaundice will go away.
- During an eclipse if pregnant woman scratches herself, a black mark will appear on her baby.
- It's not good to let someone compliment your child too much, because they may become jinxed and bad luck may fall on them. (This is called "Nazar"-ing a child.)
- If your cross under a rainbow, a sex change will occur. A boy will turn to a girl and a girl will turn into a boy.
- Don't click the scissors, it brings about a fight.
- Cover your bald head or else it may start raining.
- If you draw lines on the ground you will be in debt.
- Jingling your keys will cause a fight to occur.
- If a boy chews gum, his beard will grow uneven or sideways.
- After praying, you should fold a side of the prayer mat or the devil will come and pray on it.
- After reading the Quran, you should close it immediately, or the devil will come and read from it.
- You will be falsely accused of something if your feet touch a broom.
- If a male child is circumcised, fasten a piece of feroza (pure turquoise) jewelry to his bedding above the head and he will heal faster and nicely.
- When a newborn is brought into the house and placed into his or her bed, hanging something (jewelry etc..) with the name of Allah on it will help keep the baby safe from harm when they sleep.
- Marriage between the two holidays Eid ul Fitr and Eid ul Adha is prohibited.
- Shaving a baby's hair will make its hair grow thicker.

Body Movements and Gestures

- ***Feet and Head***
 Big blunders can arise if Westerners are unaware of the significance of the head and the feet in a Muslim culture. Afghans typically sit with legs crossed. Pointing the soles of the feet towards someone is impolite because the soles of the feet (shoe) are considered dirty, closest to the ground, closer to the devil and farther away from God. When in the presence of Muslims, be careful not to raise or cross your legs in such a way that the sole of the foot faces others in the room. It is important to be aware of how the bottoms of your feet are pointed whenever you are in a room with others. Never let the sole of your foot or shoe come in contact with an Afghan person.

- Be aware that forcing a Muslim's head to touch the ground may make him an enemy. Muslims only touch their heads to the ground when praying. You may also see Afghans holding their hands up in front of their face. This is to request divine assistance.

http://uwf.edu/atcdev/Afghanistan/Behaviors/Lesson8PhysicalGestures.html

Body Movements and Gestures

- ***Left Hand***
 Remember, in Afghanistan, and throughout the Muslim world, Afghans use the right hand exclusively for all public functions. These functions include shaking hands, eating, drinking, and passing something to another person. Using the left hand is an insult and, if done in the presence of many others, could bring shame to an Afghan. The left hand serves a specific purpose – hygiene after the use of the toilet. Afghans will cleanse their hands immediately after. In fact, many consider the Western practice of using paper to be offensive, and question how paper can make one sufficiently clean. Some historians believe this may be the reason hand shaking is done with the right hand universally in all cultures.

- Afghans are liberal with hand gestures and facial expressions during discussions. The sooner Westerners can acquaint themselves with some of the gestures, mannerisms, and taboos of the region, the less likely negative social situations will arise. Vulgar American hand gestures are understood and should not be used. Do not burp or spit in public; both are considered rude and insulting. Pounding the fist into the palm and stroking the beard of chin signals revenge.
- http://uwf.edu/atcdev/Afghanistan/Behaviors/Lesson8PhysicalGestures.html

Body Movements and Gestures

- Likewise, many facial expressions and body movements are universal. For instance, a scowl, grimace or frown means the same thing in Afghanistan as in the U.S. As in Western cultures, Afghans nod the head up and down for “yes” and left and right for “no.” Winking always has sexual connotations and should be avoided.



- To beckon someone, one motions downward with the palm of the hand facing the ground. Avoid pointing a finger at objects or at a person to whom you wish to speak. To point at or beckon others with the fingers is extremely rude and can be construed as a sexual advance.
- http://uwf.edu/atcdev/Afghanistan/Behaviors/Lesson8PhysicalGestures.html

Body Movements and Gestures

Thumbs Up and The OK Sign

- The thumbs-up gesture traditionally is an offensive Muslim insult. It is equivalent to using the middle finger in the Western world. Some more media savvy Afghans may understand the Western meaning of an upturned thumb and intend for the gesture to mean just that. Other Afghans may use the gesture in its traditional sense.





- The OK sign, a circle made with the thumb and index finger, takes on different cultural meanings worldwide. Although in the United States it is generally accepted to mean all is well, in other cultures it can symbolize the evil eye, suggest a person or thing is worthless (0-value), or act as a lewd reference to a part of a woman's body. As with thumbs up, many Afghans have come to accept this symbol to mean all is OK, but it is safer to avoid the gesture entirely.
- http://uwf.edu/atcdev/Afghanistan/Behaviors/Lesson8PhysicalGestures.html

Body Movements and Gestures

- Hospitality is an important element of Afghan life and includes generosity of food, relationship building, **and polite gestures of hand shaking and small talk upon greeting.** Keep in mind though, that these same behaviors are not appropriate towards women (unless you are a woman). Social practices of eating communally on floor pillows, waiting for elders, removing shoes upon entering and using the right hand are best practiced by observing others. Hand gestures which include pointing, the middle finger and upward palms are considered offensive, while standing within close contact is the norm. Discussions regarding politics and religion should be avoided as well as any action or speech which criticizes an Afghan person. While many Afghans appreciate cats, dogs are not pets. Attempting to rush a social or business encounter will remain unproductive, as Afghans are more focused on relationships rather than agendas. Keep in mind:
- Sit with legs crossed without showing the soles of your feet
- Respect and accept hospitality
- Follow elders and locals with regard to introduction and meeting protocol
- Be patient
- Display rank appropriate behavior
- Only women may touch or inquire of Afghan women
- http://uwf.edu/atcdev/Afghanistan/Behaviors/Lesson8PhysicalGestures.html

Shaking Hands



U.S. Army photo by Spc De'Yonte Mosley

Inspiring Stories

The unit won the hearts and minds of Afghans:

First Sgt. John Hanson from Cal Guard ADT was deployed to Afghanistan in Kunar Province. This is the way he and his unit won the hearts and minds of Afghans: The Unit discovered people there are at the very, very low end of the poverty scale and their animals are extremely important to them, so, they decided to help them with their animals and they vaccinated close to 14,000 head of animals, goats, cows, sheep.

As a result of this mission, a village of 100 people has water for themselves, their animals and their crops," Velte said. "It marked a milestone as our first official completed project."

The Cal Guard ADT is also providing technical expertise in leadership skills. They are pushing the local government to get involved at the lowest levels so people there will have confidence their government will help them.

"None of that will be able to be implemented unless the people believe in their district governments and the provincial governments and overall government," Hanson said.

“It's been an exceptional door opener. Every village we've been into, they know who the ADT is and when we return, or when our counterparts return, they know we are there to do good things for them," Hanson said.

This is a way to get the support of villagers and to give Afghans a good impression of Americans and their in their country.

Inspiring Stories

Afghan saved a GI, now pays the price

This is the story of Muhammad Gulab who saved the life of a US soldier. Gulab knew that in rescuing the American, Petty Officer 1st Class Marcus Luttrell, he was risking his own life. The day before, he had heard the gunfire and shouting of pro-Taliban guerrillas who had battled a team of U.S. Navy SEAL commandos. Killed in that battle were three Navy SEALs – Matt Axelson, Danny Dietz and Michael Murphy. Luttrell was the sole American survivor of the fight. When he saw the collapsing soldier with dried blood and bruises all over his body he knew it was his duty to save him. On that day, Luttrell stepped forward to Gulab, put his arms around him and handed over his rifle, Gulab said with that, Luttrell entrusted his life not only to the shepherd but also to the ancient and ironclad moral code of the Pashtun people. Their code of honor, called *pashtunwali*, is written in no constitution or legislation, but in the mountains and deserts of Pakistan and Afghanistan that are the Pashtuns' homeland. It carries the force of law.

Inspiring Stories

"He came to me for help. If I did not help a guest, it would have been a great shame for me," Gulab said – a shame that might have led to his expulsion from his community. Gulab walked the wounded Luttrell to his home at his house, Gulab tried to make Luttrell comfortable. He gave him some of his clothes, but he was too tall for them . . . he laid him in a bed and his brother cleaned his wounds. They cooked some goat for him, but at first he wouldn't eat. Armed men came to his door to get the soldier, but he protected him. Meanwhile, Gulab's family sent word to U.S. forces based across an 8,500-foot mountain from the Shuraik Valley, at Asadabad. "We got some paper and I told the soldier to write a note," Gulab said. "We sewed it inside the hem of my brother-in-law's shirt. I sent him to the Americans to tell them that we had their soldier and the Taliban were going to attack us."

Four days after Gulab found the American, U.S. troops arrived to rescue him. They loaded Luttrell and Gulab into a helicopter for a flight to an American base at Jalalabad. SEAL was being readied for medical evacuation to the United States, and Gulab did not accept the $200,000. He was proud that he saved the life of his guest.

Inspiring Stories

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates' visited Marines in Nowzad, Afghanistan, March 9 2010 – Nowzad is in Kandahar. What he saw was the success of the Marines which made him to believe the new strategy was working in Afghanistan.

People are moving back to the city, and that's indicative of what's happening in other areas, thanks to a fundamental change in counterinsurgency strategy in the country, Gates said.

During his walk in the town, the secretary stopped and spoke with Afghan storekeepers and families. The walk would have been unthinkable six months ago, when the Taliban controlled what was once the second-largest city in the province. When the Marines first went into the city, they faced tough opposition and found mines and improvised explosive devices everywhere. Now, more than 50 shops are operating in the city, and people are returning.

Nowzad is not a poster city. The shops are mud-walled, one-story huts facing the street. Garage doors, not windows, secure the premises. People hang out in front of the stores for lack of any worthwhile employment. The "clear, hold, build" strategy will require time here, Gates acknowledged.

"You have to begin with the fact that it's a poor country to start with and has been through 30 years of war," Gates said. "You have to have some context here: Build to what? It seems to me that somebody having a roof over their head and being able to work their farm and send their children to school – for a lot of Afghans today, that sounds like a pretty good life."

Gates said the young service members are inspirational.

Inspiring Stories

Death of Afghan elder raises tension but the family of the victim has no hostility towards Americans and they accepted the US apology.

This story began in a village called Sarbanai, Afghanistan.

Shayesta Khan was about 75, a village elder with a long white beard and a white cap, a peacemaker who settled local squabbles. He said he liked the Americans and once helped U.S. troops search a villager's home for weapons.

Khan never expected U.S. soldiers to show up at his house in the middle of the night. When they did, bursting into his family compound on May 17, Khan was asleep. By the time the soldiers left, Khan was dead, shot in his pajamas in his bedroom.

What happened in between is not clear. The U.S. military says Khan was shot because he did not obey commands to stop moving. The Afghan government and Khan's family say he was shot for no reason.

He was an innocent person, not guilty of anything," his son Daktar Khan said. "He was an old man who was killed in his bed."

Unfortunate incident, U.S. says

Afghan officials worry insurgents could use the death to recruit followers or turn people against the U.S.-led coalition.

According to the U.S. military, the raid followed intelligence reports that bombs were being made at the compound.
A villager had directed soldiers to the home of Mirwais, said O'Hara, the coalition spokesman. The family said the soldiers arrived after midnight, breaking open a side door, where steps lead to an open area outside Khan's bedroom. In the confusion, family members heard shouts and then gunshots.
Khan's sons said he was trying to light the lantern above his bed when he was shot. Intelligence official Esmati, who has investigated the case, said he believes Khan was trying to grab a shirt. The bullets hit just above Khan's bed and the door. They appear to have been fired from outside, through the windows.

Three days after the death of Shayesta Khan, U.S. soldiers went to Sarbanai to offer their condolences and concern for the family, O'Hara said. Karzai's office also sent the family the equivalent of $4,000, a fortune here, said Merajuddin Pathan, governor of Khost.

Family members considered the U.S. visit an apology, which they accepted. They said they harbor no bad feelings toward the U.S. But Shayesta Khan's older brother still does not accept that he is dead.

“Undelivered promises”

- A village elder claimed that member of the PRT promised to deliver Gabion Baskets to his village. The Gabion Basket is a system that controls erosion and water flow along creeks and riverbeds that farmers rely upon of irrigation. The elder, and thus much of the village, had lost considerable faith in ISAF as a whole because of what he perceived as a lie. It appears that the PRT was operating outside the purview of the battle-space owner by interfacing with the populace and making aid promises it could or would not produce. The two lessons here are how important integrity is to many, many Afghans, especially elders. It’s not about the Gabion Baskets, it’s about your word. The second lesson is there has to be unity of command and effort, without this, there is no sustainability.

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